New INDIVIDUALIST Review

KINDS OF ORDER IN SOCIETY

F. A. HAYEK

A REPORT ON TEN YEARS OF ECONOMIC PLANNING IN INDIA

B. R. SHENOY

SKINNER'S BEHAVIORIST UTOPIA

BRUCE GOLDBERG

BENJAMIN CONSTANT

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NEW INDIVIDUALIST REVIEW

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Kinds of Order in Society

F. A. HAYEK

WE CALL A MULTITUDE of men a society when their activities are mutually adjusted to one another. Men in society can successfully pursue their ends because they know what to expect from their fellows. Their relations, in other words, show a certain order. How such an order of the multifarious activities of millions of men is produced or can be achieved is the central problem of social theory and social policy.[1]

Sometimes the very existence of such an order is denied when it is asserted that society—or, more particularly, its economic activities—are "chaotic." A complete absence of an order, however, cannot be seriously maintained. What presumably is meant by that complaint is that society is not as orderly as it should be. The orderliness of existing society may indeed be capable of great improvement; but the criticism is due mainly to the circumstance that both the order which exists and the manner in which it is formed are not readily perceived. The plain man will be aware of an order of social affairs only to the extent that such an order has been deliberately arranged; and he is inclined to blame the apparent absence of an order in much of what he sees on the fact that nobody has deliberately ordered those activities. Order, to the ordinary person, is the result of the ordering activity of an ordering mind. Much of the order of society of which we speak is, however, not of this kind; and the very recognition that there exists such an order requires a certain amount of reflection.

The chief difficulty is that the order of social events can generally not be perceived by our senses but can only be traced by our intellect. It is, as we shall say, an abstract and not a concrete order. It is also a very complex order. And it is an order which, though it is the result of human action, has not been created by men deliberately arranging the elements in a preconceived pattern. These peculiarities of the social order are closely connected, and it will be the task of this essay to make their interrelation clear. We shall see that, although there

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[1] The concept of order has recently achieved a central position in the social sciences largely through the work of Walter Eucken and his friends and pupils, known as the Ordo-circle from the yearbook *Ordo* issued by them. For other instances of its use, see: J. J. Spengler, "The Problem of Order in Economic Affairs," *Southern Economic Journal*, July, 1948, reprinted in J. J. Spengler and W. R. Allen, eds., *Essays on Economic Thought* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1960); H. Barth, *Die Idee der Ordnung* (Zurich: E. Rentsch, 1958); R. Meimberg, *Alternativen der Ordnung* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1956); and, more remotely relevant as a treatment of some of the philosophical problems involved, W. D. Oliver, *Theory of Order* (Yellow Springs, Ohio: Antioch Press, 1951).

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is no absolute necessity that a complex order must always be spontaneous and abstract, the more complex the order is at which we aim, the more we shall have to rely on spontaneous forces to bring it about, and the more our power of control will be confined in consequence to the abstract features and not extend to the concrete manifestations of that order.[2]

(The terms "concrete" and "abstract," which we shall have to use frequently, are often used in a variety of meanings. It may be useful, therefore, to state here in which sense they will be used. As "concrete" we shall describe particular real objects given to observation by our senses, and regard as the distinguishing characteristic of such concrete objects that there are always still more properties of them to be discovered than we already know or have perceived. In comparison with any such determinate object, and the intuitive knowledge we can acquire of it, all images and concepts of it are abstract and possess a limited number of attributes. *All* thought is in this sense necessarily abstract, although there are degrees of abstractness and it is customary to describe the relatively less abstract in contrast to the more abstract as (relatively) concrete. Strictly speaking, however, the contrast between the concrete and the abstract, as we shall use it, is the same as that between a fact of which we always know only abstract attributes but can always discover still more such attributes, and all those images, conceptions, and concepts which we retain when we no longer contemplate the particular object.[3]

The distinction between an abstract and a (relatively) concrete order is, of course, the same as that between a concept with a small connotation (intention) and a consequently wide denotation on the one hand, and a concept with a rich connotation and a correspondingly narrow denotation on the other. An abstract order of a certain kind may comprise many different manifestations of that order. The distinction becomes particularly important in the case of complex orders based on a hierarchy of ordering relations where several such orders may agree with respect to their more general ordering principles but differ in others. What is significant in the present context is that it may be important that an order possesses certain abstract features irrespective of its concrete manifestations, and that we may have it in our power to bring it about that an order which spontaneously forms itself will have those desirable characteristics, but not to determine the concrete manifestations or the position of the individual elements.)

THE SIMPLE CONCEPTION of an order of the kind which results when somebody puts the parts of an intended whole in their appropriate places applies in many parts of society. Such an order which is achieved by *arranging* the relations between the parts according to a preconceived plan we call in the social field an *organization*. The extent to which the power of many men can be increased by such deliberate co-ordination of their efforts is well-known and many of the achievements of man rest on the use of this technique. It is an order which we all understand because we know how it is made. But it is not the only nor even the chief kind of order on which the working of society rests; nor can the whole of the order of society be produced in this manner.

The *discovery* that there exist in society orders of another kind which have not been designed by men but have resulted from the action of individuals without their intending to create such an order, is the achievement of social theory—or, rather, it was this discovery

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[2] For a more extensive treatment of the problem of the scientific treatment of complex phenomena, see my essay, "The Theory of Complex Phenomena," in Mario A. Bunge, ed.; *The Critical Approach: Essays in Honor of Karl Popper* (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, Inc., 1963).

[3] For a helpful survey of the abstract/concrete relation and especially its significance in jurisprudence, see K. Englisch, *Die Idee der Konkretisierung in Rechtswissenschaft unserer Zeit* (Heidelberg: *Abhandlungen der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften*, Phil.-Hist. Klasse, I, 1953).

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which has shown that there was an object for social theory. It shook the deeply-ingrained belief of men that where there was an order there must also have been a personal orderer. It had consequences far beyond the field of social theory since it provided the conceptions which made possible a theoretical explanation of the structures of biological phenomena.[4] And in the social field it provided the foundation for a systematic argument for individual liberty.

This kind of order which is characteristic not only of biological organisms (to which the originally much wider meaning of the term organism is now usually confined), is an order which is not made by anybody but which forms itself.

It is for this reason usually called a "spontaneous" or sometimes (for reasons we shall yet explain) a "polycentric" order. If we understand the forces which determine such an order, we can use them by creating the conditions under which such an order will form itself.

This indirect method of bringing about an order has the advantage that it can be used to produce orders which are far more complex than any order we can produce by putting the individual pieces in their appropriate places. But it has the drawback that it enables us to determine only the general character of the resulting order and not its detail. Its use in one sense thus extends our powers: it places us in a position to produce very complex orders which we could never produce by putting the individual elements in their places. Our power over the particular arrangement of the elements in such an order is however much more limited than it is over an order which we produce by individually arranging the parts. All we can control are certain abstract features of such an order, but not its concrete detail.

All this is familiar in the physical and biological field. We could never produce a crystal by directly placing the individual molecules from which it is built up. But we can create the conditions under which such a crystal will form itself. If for that purpose we make use of known forces, we can, however, not determine the position an individual molecule will occupy within a crystal, or even the size or position of the several crystals. Similarly, we can create the conditions under which a biological organism will grow and develop. But all we can do is create conditions favorable to that growth, and we are able to determine the resulting shape and structure only within narrow limits. The same applies to spontaneous social orders.

IN THE CASE OF certain social phenomena, such as language, the fact that they possess an order which nobody has deliberately designed and which we have to discover, is now generally recognized. In these fields we have at last outgrown the naive belief that every orderly arrangement of parts which assist man in the pursuit of his ends must be due to a personal maker. There was a time when it was believed that all those useful institutions which serve the intercourse of men, such as language, morals, law, writing, or money, must be due to an individual inventor or legislator, or to an explicit agreement of wise men who consented to certain useful practices.[5] We understand now the process by which such institutions have gradually taken shape through men learning to act according to certain rules — rules which they long knew how to follow before there was any need to state them in words.

But if in those simpler instances we have overcome the belief that, wherever we find an order or a regular structure which serves a human purpose, there must also have been a mind which deliberately created it, the reluctance to recognize the existence of such spontaneous orders is still with us in many other fields. We still cling to a division, deeply embedded in Western thought since the

[4] All three independent discoverers of biological evolution, Darwin, Wallace, and Spencer, admittedly derived their ideas from the current concepts of social evolution.

[5] Cf., e.g., the examples given by Denys Hay, *Polydore Vergil* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), ch. 3.

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classical antiquity, between things which owe their order to "nature" and those which owe it to "convention."[6] It still seems strange and unbelievable to many people that an order may arise neither wholly independent of human action, nor as the intended result of such action, but as the unforeseen effect of conduct which men have adopted with no such end in mind. Yet much of what we call culture is just such a spontaneously grown order which arose neither altogether independently of human action nor by design, but by a process which stands somewhere between these two possibilities which were long considered as exclusive alternatives.

Such spontaneous orders we find not only in the working of institutions like language or law (or, more conspicuously, the biological organisms) which show a recognizable permanent structure that is the result of slow evolution, but also in the relations of the market which must continuously form and reform themselves and where only the conditions conducive to their constant reconstitution have been shaped by evolution. The genetic and the functional aspects can never be fully separated.[7]

That division of labor on which our economic system rests is the best example of such a daily renewed order. In the order created by the market, the participants are constantly induced to respond to events of which they do not directly know, in a way which secures a continuous flow of production, a coordination of the quantities of the different things so that the even flow is not interrupted and everything is produced at least as cheaply as anybody can still provide the last quantities for which others are prepared to pay the costs. That it is an order which consists of the adaptation to the multitudinous circumstances which no single person can know completely is one reason why its existence is not perceived by simple inspection. It is embodied in such relations as those between prices and costs of commodities and the corresponding distribution of resources; and we can confirm that such an order in fact exists only after we have reconstructed its principles in our minds.

THE "ORDERING FORCES" of which we can make use in such instances are the rules governing the behavior of the elements of which the orders are formed. They determine that each element will respond to the particular circumstances which act on it in a manner which will result in an overall pattern. Each of the iron filings, for instance, which are magnetized by a magnet under the sheet of paper on which we have poured them, will so act on and react to all the others that they will arrange themselves in a characteristic figure of which we can predict the general shape but not the detail. In this simple instance the elements are all of the same kind and the known uniform rules which determine their behavior would enable us to predict the behavior of each in great detail if we only knew all the facts and were able to deal with them in all their complexity.

Some order of a determinate general character may form itself also from various kinds of different elements, i.e., of elements whose response to given circumstances will be alike only in some but not in all respects. The formation of the molecules of highly complex organic compounds provides an example from the physical sciences. But the fact is especially significant for many of the spontaneous orders which form themselves in the biological and social sphere. They are composed of many different elements which will respond to the same circumstances alike in some respects but not in others. But they will form orderly wholes, because each element responds to its particular environment in accord-

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[6] Cf. F. Heinimann, *Nomos und Physis* (Basel: F. Reinhardt, 1945).

[7] On the inseparability of the genetic and the functional aspects of these phenomena as well as the general relation between organisms and organizations, see Carl Menger, *Untersuchungen uber die Methode der Sozialwissenschaften und der politischen Oekonomie insbesondere* (Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1883), which is still the classical treatment of these topics.

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ance with definite rules. The order results thus from the separate responses of the different elements to the particular circumstances which act on them and for this reason we describe it as a "polycentric order."[8]

The physical examples of spontaneous orders we have considered are instructive because they show that the rules which the elements follow need of course not be "known" to them. The same is true more often than not where living beings and particularly men are the elements of such an order. Man does not know most of the rules on which he acts;[9] and even what we call his intelligence is largely a system of rules which operate on him but which he does not know. In animal societies and in a great measure in primitive human society, the structure of social life is determined by rules of action which manifest themselves only in their being obeyed. It is only when individual intellects begin to differ sufficiently (or individual minds become more complex) that it becomes necessary to express the rules in communicable form so that they can be taught by example and deviant behavior can be corrected and differences of view expressed about what is to be decided.[10] Though man never existed without laws which he obeyed, he did exist for millennia without laws which he knew in the sense that he was able to articulate them.

Where the elements of the social order are individual men, the particular circumstances to which each of them reacts are those which are known to him. But it is only when the responses of the individuals show a certain similarity, or obey some common rules that this will result in an overall order. Even a limited similarity of their responses—common rules which determine only some aspects of their behavior—suffice, however, for the formation of an order of a general kind. The important fact is that this order will be an adaptation to a multitude of circumstances which are known only to the individual members but not as a totality to any one of them; and that such an order will result only because, and in so far as, the different individuals follow similar rules in these responses to the particular circumstances known to them. This does not mean, nor is it necessary for the production of an order, that in similar circumstances different persons will do precisely the same thing. All that is meant and required is that in some respect they follow the same rule, that their responses are similar in some degree, or that they are limited to a certain range of actions which all have some attributes in common. This is true even of the iron filings in our former illustration which may not all move with the same speed because they will be different in shape, smoothness, or weight. Such differences will determine the particular manifestation of the resulting pattern which, in consequence of our ignorance of these particulars, will be unpredictable; but the general character of the pattern will be unaffected by them and will therefore be predictable.

Similarly, the responses of the human individuals to events in their environment need be similar only in certain abstract aspects in order that a definite overall pattern should result. There must be some regularity but not complete regularity in their actions: they must follow some common rules, but these common rules need not be sufficient to determine their action fully; and what action a particular individual will take will depend on further characteristics peculiar to him.

[8] Cf. Michael Polanyi, *The Logic of Liberty* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1951), p. 159.

[9] On the whole issue of the relation of unconscious rules to human action, on which I can touch here only briefly, see my essay, "Rules, Perception, and Intelligibility," *Proceedings of the British Academy*, v. 48 (1962-63).

[10] There thus seems to be some truth in the alleged original state of goodness in which everybody spontaneously did right and could not do otherwise, and to the idea that only with increased knowledge came wrongdoing. It is only with the knowledge of other possibilities that the individual becomes able to deviate from the established rules; without such knowledge, no sin.

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The question which is of central importance both for social theory and social policy is what rules the individuals must follow so that an order will result. Some such common rules the individuals will follow merely because of the similarity of their environment, or, rather, because of the similar manner in which this environment reflects itself in their minds. Others they will all follow spontaneously because they are part of the common cultural tradition of their society. But there are still others which it is necessary that they be made to obey, since it would be in the interest of each individual to disregard them, though the overall order will be formed only if the rule is generally obeyed.

The chief regularity in the conduct of individuals in a society based on division of labor and exchange follows from their common situation: they all work to earn an income. This means that they will normally prefer a larger income for a given effort—and possibly increase their effort if its productivity increases. This is a rule which is sufficiently generally followed in fact for those who follow it to impress upon society an order of a certain kind. But the fact that most people follow this rule in their actions leaves the character of the resulting order yet very indeterminate, and it certainly does not by itself insure that this order will be of a beneficent character. For this it is necessary that people also obey certain conventional rules, i.e., rules which do not follow simply from the nature of their knowledge and aims but which have become habitual in their society. The common rules of morals and of law are the chief instance of this.

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It is not our task here to analyze the relation between the different kinds of rules which people in fact follow and the order which results from this. We are interested only in one particular class of rules which contribute to the nature of the order and which, because we can deliberately shape them, are the chief tool through which we can influence the general character of the order which will form itself: the rules of law.

These rules differ from the others which individuals follow chiefly by the circumstances that people are made to obey them by their fellows. They are necessary because only if the individuals know what means are at their respective disposals, and are made to bear the consequences of their use of these means, will the resulting order possess certain desirable attributes. The appropriate delimitation of these individual spheres is the main function of the rules of law, and their desirable content one of the chief problems of social policy. This is not altered by the fact that their desirable form has been found largely by the accumulated experience of ages and that their further improvement is also to be expected more from slow experimental piecemeal evolution than from redesign of the whole.

THOUGH THE CONDUCT of the individuals which produces the social order is guided in part by deliberately enforced rules, the order is still a spontaneous order, corresponding to an organism rather than to an organization. It does not rest on the activities being fitted together according to a preconceived plan, but on their being adjusted to each other through the confinement of the action of each by certain general rules. And the enforcement of these general rules insures only the general character of the order and not its concrete realization. It also provides only general facilities which unknown individuals may use for their own ends, but does not insure the achievement of any particular results.

In order to enforce the rules required for the formation of this spontaneous order, an order of the other kind, an organization, is also required. Even if the rules themselves were given once and for all, their enforcement would demand the coordinated effort of many men. The task of changing and improving the rules may also, though it need not, be the object of organized effort. And in so far as the state, in addition to upholding the law, renders other services to the citizens, this also requires an organized apparatus.

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The organization of the apparatus of government is also effected in some measure by means of rules. But these rules which serve the creation and direction of an organization are of a different character from those which make possible the formation of a spontaneous order. They are rules which apply only to particular people selected by government; and they have to be followed by them in most instances (i.e., except in the case of judges) in the pursuit of particular ends also determined by government.

Even where the type of order chosen is that of organization and not a spontaneous order, the organizer must largely rely on rules rather than specific commands to the members of the organization. This is due to the fundamental problem which all complex order encounters: the organizer wants the individuals who are to cooperate to make use of knowledge which he himself does not possess. In none but the most simple kinds of social order it is conceivable that all activities are governed by a single mind. And certainly nobody has yet succeeded in deliberately arranging all the activities of a complex society; there is no such thing as a fully planned society of any degree of complexity. If anyone did succeed in organizing such a society, it would not make use of many minds but would instead be altogether dependent on one mind; it would certainly not be complex but very primitive —and so would soon be the mind whose knowledge and will determined everything. The facts which enter into the design of such an order could be only those which could be perceived and digested by this mind; and as only he could decide on action and thus gain experience, there could not be that interplay of many minds in which a lone mind can grow.

The kind of rules which govern an organization are rules for the performance of assigned tasks. They presuppose that the place of each individual in a fixed skeleton order is decided by deliberate appointment, and that the rules which apply to him depend on the place he has been given in that order. The rules thus regulate only the detail of the action of appointed functionaries or agencies of government—or the functioning of an organization created by arrangement.

Rules which are to enable individuals to find their own places in a spontaneous order of the whole society must be general; they must not assign to particular individuals a status, but rather leave the individual to create his own position. The rules which assist in the running of an organization, on the other hand, operate only within a framework of specific commands which designate the particular ends which the organization aims at and the particular functions which the several members are to perform. Though applicable only to particular, individually designated people, these rules of an organization look very much like the general rules underlying a spontaneous order, but they must not be confused with the latter. They enable those who have to carry out commands to fill in detail according to circumstances which they, but not the author of the command, know.

In the terms we have used, this means that the general rules of law aim at an abstract order whose concrete or particular manifestation is unpredictable; while both the commands and the rules which enable those who obey commands to fill in the detail left open by the command, serve a concrete order or an organization. The more complex the order aimed at, the greater will be the part of the circumstances determining its concrete manifestation which cannot be known to those whose concern it is to secure the formation of the order, and the more they will be able to control it only through rules and not through commands. In the most complex type of organizations little more than the assignment of particular functions to particular people will be determined by specific decisions, while the performance of these functions will be regulated only by rules. It is when we pass from the biggest organization, serving particular tasks, to the order of the whole of society

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which comprises the relations between those organizations as well as the relations between them and the individuals and among the individuals, that this overall order relies entirely on rules, i.e., is entirely of a spontaneous character, with not even its skeleton determined by commands. The situation is, of course, that, because it was not dependent on organization but grew as a spontaneous order, the structure of modern society has attained a degree of complexity which far exceeds that which it is possible to achieve by deliberate organization. Even the rules which made the growth of this complex order possible were not designed in anticipation of that result; but those peoples who happened to adopt suitable rules developed a complex civilization which prevailed over others. It is thus a paradox, based on a complete misunderstanding of these connections, when it is sometimes contended that we must deliberately plan modern society because it has grown so complex. The fact is rather that we can preserve an order of such complexity only if we control it not by the method of "planning," i.e., by direct orders, but on the contrary aim at the formation of a spontaneous order based on general rules.

We shall presently have to consider how in such a complex system the different principles of order must be combined. At this stage it is necessary, however, at once to forestall a misunderstanding and to stress that there is one way in which it can never be sensible to mix the two principles. While in an organization it makes sense, and indeed will be the rule, to determine the skeleton by specific command and regulate the detail of the action of the different members only by rules, the reverse could never serve a rational purpose; if the overall character of an order is of the spontaneous kind, we cannot improve upon it by issuing to the elements of that order direct commands: because only these individuals and no central authority will know the circumstances which make them do what they do.

EVERY SOCIETY of any degree of complexity must make use of both ordering principles which we have discussed. But while they must be combined by being applied to different tasks and to the sectors of society corresponding to them, they cannot successfully be mixed in any manner we like. Lack of understanding of the difference between the two principles constantly leads to such confusion. It is the manner in which the two principles are combined which determines the character of the different social and economic systems. (The fact that these different "systems" which result from different combinations of the two ordering principles, are sometimes also referred to as different "orders" has added to the terminological confusion.)

We shall consider further only a free system which relies on spontaneous ordering forces not merely (as every system must) to fill in the interstices left by the commands determining its aim and structure, but also for its overall order. Such systems not only have many organizations (in particular, firms) as their elements but also require an organization to enforce obedience to (and modify and develop) the body of abstract rules which are required to secure the formation of the spontaneous overall order. The fact that government is itself an organization and employs rules as an instrument of its organization, and that beyond its task of enforcing the law this organization renders a multitude of other services, has led to a complete confusion between the nature of the different kinds of rules and the orders which they serve.

The abstract and general rules of law in the narrow sense (in which "the law" comprises the rules of civil and criminal law) aim not at the creation of an order by arrangement but at creating the conditions in which an order will form itself. But the conception of law as a means of order-creation (a term which, as a translation of the equally ambiguous German *Ordnungsgestaltung*, is now invading Anglo-American jurisprudence[11]) in the hands of public lawyers and civil

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servants who are primarily concerned with tasks of organization rather than with the conditions of the formation of a spontaneous order, is increasingly interpreted as meaning an instrument of arrangement. This conception of law, which is the conception prevailing in totalitarian states, has characteristically been given its clearest expression by the legal theorist who became Hitler's chief legal apologist, as "concrete order formation" (*konkretes Ordnungsdenken*).[12] This kind of law aims at creating a concrete preconceived order by putting each individual on a task assigned by authority.

But though this technique of creating an order is indispensable for organizing the institutions of government and all the enterprises and households which form the elements of the order of society as a whole, it is wholly inadequate for bringing about the infinitely more complex overall order.

We have it in our power to assure that such an overall order will form itself and will possess certain desirable general characteristics, but only if we do not attempt to control the detail of that order. But we jettison that power and deprive ourselves of the possibility of achieving that abstract order of the whole, if we insist on placing particular pieces into the place we wish them to occupy. It is the condition of the formation of this abstract order that we leave the concrete and particular details to the separate individuals and bind them only by general and abstract rules. If we do not provide this condition but restrict the capacity of the individuals to adjust themselves to the particular circumstances known only to them, we destroy the forces making for a spontaneous overall order and are forced to replace them by deliberate arrangement which, though it gives us greater control over detail, restricts the range over which we can hope to achieve a coherent order.

IT IS NOT IRRELEVANT to our chief purpose if in conclusion we consider briefly the role which abstract rules play in the coordination not only of the actions of many different persons but also in the mutual adjustment of the successive decisions of a single individual or organization. Here, too, it is often not possible to make detailed plans for action in the more distant future (although what we should do now depends on what we shall want to do in the future), simply because we do not yet know the particular facts which we shall face. The method through which we nevertheless succeed in giving some coherence to our actions is that we adopt a framework of rules for guidance which makes the general pattern though not the detail of our life predictable. It is these rules of which we are often not consciously aware—in many instances rules of a very abstract character—which make the course of our lives orderly. Many of these rules will be "customs" of the social group in which we have grown up and only some will be individual "habits" which we have accidentally or deliberately acquired. But they all serve to abbreviate the list of circumstances which we need to take into account in the particular instances, singling out certain classes of facts as alone determining the general kind of action which we should take. At the same time, this means that we systematically disregard certain facts which we know and which would be relevant to our decisions if we knew all such facts, but which it is rational to neglect because they are accidental partial information which does not alter the probability that, if we could know and digest all the facts, the balance of advantage would be in favor of following the rule.

It is, in other words, our restricted horizon of knowledge of the concrete facts which makes it necessary to coordinate our actions by submitting to

[11] Cf., e.g., E. Bodenheimer, *Jurisprudence, the Philosophy and Method of Law* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962), p. 211.

[12] See Carl Schmitt, *Die drei Arten des rechtswissenschaftlichen Denkens* (Hamburg: Schriften fur Akademie fur deutsches Recht, 1934).

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abstract rules rather than to attempt to decide each particular case solely in view of the limited set of relevant particular facts which we happen to know. It may sound paradoxical that rationality should thus require that we deliberately disregard knowledge which we possess; but this is part of the necessity of coming to terms with our unalterable ignorance of much that would be relevant if we knew it. Where we know that the probability is that the unfavorable effects of a kind of action will overbalance the favorable ones, the decision should not be affected by the circumstance that in the particular case a few consequences which we happen to be able to foresee should all be favorable. The fact is that in an apparent striving after rationality in the sense of fuller taking into account all the foreseeable consequences, we may achieve greater irrationality, less effective taking into account of remote effects and an altogether less coherent result. It is the great lesson which science has taught us that we must resort to the abstract where we cannot master the concrete. The preference for the concrete is to renounce the power which thought gives us. It is therefore also not really surprising that the consequence of modern democratic legislation which disdains submitting to general rules and attempts to solve each problem as it comes on its specific merits, is probably the most irrational and disorderly arrangement of affairs ever produced by the deliberate decisions of men.

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The Results of Planning in India

B. R. SHENOY

PLANNING IS NOT, like Communism, a way of life, though planning and Communism necessarily go together. In democracies, planning may be defended only as a means to an end. The aim of planning in India is fourfold: abolition of poverty, liquidation of unemployment, reduction of income inequalities, and industrialization. By emphasizing the third objective — reduction of income inequalities — it is sought to establish, simultaneously with economic progress, a socialist pattern of society, the principal characteristics of which will be absence of concentrations of wealth, income and economic power, and prevention of the stifling of talent for want of opportunities.

Indian planners believe that these objectives cannot be achieved with the speed necessary to prevent a social explosion, if the economy and society are left free to trudge along on their own. In common with their counterparts in other countries, they have a deep-seated distrust of the ability of the free-market mechanism to realize striking overall progress; they believe that the profit motive animating it is apt to divert productive resources into fields where they may yield the highest private gains rather than the highest social good. They maintain that a planning commission, on the other hand, would be actuated by considerations of the advance of the community as a whole, not by any private or sectional interests. Though this assertion is unsupported by any rigorous reasoning or empirical evidence, it represents the conviction of the policy makers and of the people that count in India.

It is now possible to put to the test this claim of Indian planners by assessing our achievements during the past decade of planning. We shall attempt this in terms of each of the four objectives of Indian economic planning.

ORDINARILY, PROGRESS in the abolition of poverty may be broadly gauged by the expansion of production. From 1950-51, the last pre-Plan year, to 1961-62, Indian national income (at constant prices) rose by 47 per cent, or at an annual rate of 3.6 per cent. This figure, however, is highly misleading as evidence of our progress in overcoming poverty. For such evidence, the increase in national income must be modified by four deflators.

First, it must be adjusted for the rise in population, as per capita income is more meaningful as an indicator of well-being than the income of the community as a whole. According to the 1961 Census, Indian population rose by 22 per cent during the past decade. On this basis,

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per capita income rose by but 18.5 per cent, from $51.98 in 1950-51 to $61.61 in 1961-62, or by less than one-half of the increase in overall national income.

Secondly, since the ultimate test of economic welfare is the marketed output of consumer goods, due allowances must be made from national income statistics (a) for the unduly large output of non-consumer goods as reflected by excess production capacities, and (b) for excessive additions to inventories. Excess capacities exist both in the capital goods and consumer goods industries and in the public as well as the private sector. They are estimated at 35 per cent in the major and minor irrigation works, of a lesser order in the power projects and at an average of 40 to 50 per cent in 40 industries.

Additions to inventories are common under inflation, though it is not always possible to assess their precise magnitude. Circumstantial evidence confirms the build-up of inventories of foodgrains during the three years ending 1958-59 when foodgrains prices rose by 18 per cent. Total foodgrains supplies — domestic production plus imports — went up from 65.81 million tons in 1955-56 to 77.70 million tons in 1958-59. This was a much faster rate of increase (over 5 per cent per year) than the increase in money incomes (3.9 per cent per year). Since, in spite of this increased production, prices rose, it seems safe to infer that part of the increase in supplies was hoarded; if the whole of the enhanced supplies had flowed into the market, prices should have fallen. Since then, on the same reasoning, some decumulation of foodgrains stocks has probably taken place. This is evidenced by the fact that, though money incomes were 20.6 per cent higher in 1962 than in 1958-59, and foodgrains supplies rose by but 5 per cent, foodgrains prices remained steady, the index of foodgrains prices being 100.1 in 1959-60 and 100.0 in 1961-62 (1952-53=100). Apparently, the supplies placed on the market were larger than the domestic output plus imports, inventories being drawn upon for the difference.

Thirdly, as the well-being of a people must be assessed by the economic condition of the masses, not by the overall magnitude of the national income, due allowances must be made for the considerable sums of unmerited and illicit shifts of income which have taken place during the past decade in favor of the upper-income groups. Such income shifts have taken place (a) as a result of inflation, which has corroded the incomes of the fixed and "sticky" money income groups—the masses of the people—and has correspondingly added to the incomes of a fraction of the community—the traders, businessmen and industrialists; (b) because of controls which, in addition to corruption, have created sheltered markets and semi-monopolistic positions, bringing windfall gains to the beneficiaries of controls; and (c) from the great expansion of the public sector, which has added phenomenally to the illicit gains of contractors and other participants in this expansion.

In recent years, the magnitude of these income shifts may be of an annual order of $1.6 billion, or more than the rate of increase in the national income, which has averaged $1.5 billion per year during the past seven years. Large as this income shift might seem at first sight, it is, possibly, an underestimate, as is suggested by a review of the components of the income shifts.

The inflationary expansion of money —if this may be defined to be expansion of the money supply in excess of the needs of expanded production at constant prices—during the seven years ending 1961-62 amounted to $1.3 billion, or about $180 million per year. This may be taken as a rough measure of the "anti-social" income shifts resulting from inflation.

By law, private importers must buy a license from the government. Such licenses have been issued in an amount averaging $1.3 billion per year over the past seven years. However, the resale value of an import license is anywhere from 30 to 500 per cent or more above its face value, depending on the commodity concerned. Assuming an average

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mark-up of 75 per cent, total net gains from these licenses may be on the order of $1.0 billion per year. The bulk of the gains from these licenses accrues to well-to-do, or comparatively well-to-do, people, such as corrupt functionaries of the state, touts and "contact" men, and the recipients of the licenses.

Public sector investment outlays have shot up from $4.1 billion in the First Plan to $9.7 billion in the Second. However, when $100 is accounted as "invested" in a public sector project, all of this does not, in fact, go into the project concerned. A part, varying with circumstances, gets siphoned off into private incomes in the form of illicit payments made for obtaining business by the contractors and successful bidders. Assuming that such illicit payments, which again accrue to the well-to-do, average 20 per cent of "investment," they have amounted to about $400 million per year in the Second Plan period.

If to the above is added monopoly revenues accruing from controls, the total anti-social income shifts, even excluding illicit earnings from price controls, distribution controls, and other restrictions, may come to $1.6 to $1.7 billion per year.

Fourthly, national income at constant prices is arrived at mainly by deflating national income at current prices by index numbers of prices. However, the latter understate the actual level of prices, since, where price controls apply, they are based on controlled prices, which are generally lower than free-market prices. This is evidenced by the disparate movements of the price index and the money supply. From 1960-61 to 1962-63, while the money supply rose by 15.3 per cent, prices rose by but 2.4 per cent. Allowance being made for the larger money requirements of the expanded national product, prices should still have risen by at least 11 per cent. The use of these defective index numbers has led to the national income at current prices being insufficiently deflated, the statistics of national income at constant prices being correspondingly exaggerated. This exaggeration may be of an order of 8 per cent during the three years ending 1962-63, so that the actual rate of growth of income during the period may be less than the rate of growth of population.

The net result of these adjustments may well be that the well-being of the masses of the people has stagnated during the past decade of planning. Eloquent evidence of this is in the consumption of food and cloth. In the context of Indian poverty, even apart from other data, the level of food and cloth consumption alone should be a sufficient indicator of plan achievements. Data on food consumption are in the *Economic Survey*, issued with the Union budget. Per capita "availability" of foodgrains per day fluctuated downward with the progress of planning, from 15.7 ozs. in 1954 to 14.0 ozs. in 1958, recovered to 16.2 ozs. in 1961, and was at 15.8 ozs. in 1962. These figures are not adjusted for additions to stocks by traders and farmers. With such adjustments, per capita consumption would be less than the "availabilities." Jail rations are 16 ozs., army rations 19 ozs. and the nutritional norm 18-19 ozs. During the five years ending 1960, annual per capita consumption of cloth, statistics of which are published in the *Indian Textile Bulletin*, issued by the Textile Commissioner, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, declined from 14.66 metres in 1956 to 13.98 metres in 1960.

THE NET GAIN FROM PLANNING in the field of employment seems to be negative. The additional employment produced by the First Plan was 4.7 million and from the Second 6.5 million—an improvement of 35 per cent—despite the steep rise of 110 per cent in investment outlays from $7.9 billion in the First Plan to $16.6 billion in the Second. Moreover, since the increase in employment has been less than the natural increase in the labor force, the Second Plan will bequeath to the Third Plan vastly more unemployed—conjectured at 9 million — than it inherited from the First—conjectured at 5.3 million. These computations are based on a population

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increase of 5 million per year—the rate indicated by the 1951 Census—of which 40 per cent is treated as additions to the labor force. The 1961 Census, however, revealed that the population has actually been rising at a rate of 7.9 million per year. If we take the latter figure, plan achievements in the field of employment appear even poorer. These employment statistics, however, cannot be taken at face value. Though issued officially, they are guesses, and the margin of error they embody may be large. But perhaps it may be broadly correct to say that the expansion of employment has probably lagged behind the expansion of the labor force.

REFERENCE HAS BEEN MADE to the anti-social income shifts resulting from inflation and statist economic measures. The experience of West Germany appears to have been similar; we are told that, while planning lasted in West Germany, there emerged "a thin upper crust able to afford anything" on top of a "broad lower stratum with insufficient purchasing power." Statism in India has concentrated power in the hands of the Administration—the politician and the civil servant. It has done this through public sector investment outlays, which amounted to $9.7 billion under the Second Plan and would be $16.9 billion under the Third—or a rise from 58 per cent to 66 per cent of total investment outlays, including foreign aid; and it has done this through permits, licenses, concessions and other instruments of statist direction and control of the economy, which enable their recipients to siphon from the community colossal gains to which they have neither economic nor moral claims. Unmerited and anti-social income shifts seem to be inevitable under statism.

Under economic freedom, on the other hand, control over investment resources would be acquired by tens of millions of entrepreneurs competing in the open market, and economic power would be correspondingly diffused over the community as a whole. Financial success would be governed by efficiency, quality and price of the output, i.e., in proportion to what the individual adds to the national product. Under statism, however, financial success often rests overwhelmingly on contacts and "pull" in obtaining patronage, and not wholly on the use of talent to contribute to the stream of the national product. Statism is apt to bring into being a body of parasitical functionaries.

IN CONTRAST TO the disappointing record in regard to the three objectives of planning reviewed above, production statistics exhibit striking progress in industrialization, the fourth objective of the planners, the General Index of industrial production going up at an annual rate of 6.7 per cent, from 100 in 1951 to 191.8 in 1961. This has not lifted up the overall national product at a comparable rate, because industries account for but a minor part, 16 to 19 per cent, of total economic activity. Though progress was recorded in all categories of production, the expansion in the output of capital goods—machinery, electrical motors, machine tools and automobiles—and intermediate goods—coal, iron and steel, other metals, cement, heavy chemicals, paints, tanned hides, rubber goods and electricity—was outstanding. In 1960, the output of capital goods ranged from 2.9 times (automobiles) to 8.9 times (diesel engines) their output in 1950; the corresponding rise in intermediate goods was from 1.6 times (coal) to 21 times (rayon yarn).

Among consumer goods, the output of cotton textiles showed the least progress, the index of cotton textiles production rising from 100 in 1951 to 117 in 1961 (1951=100). The production indices for consumer goods used by the relatively well-to-do classes of the Indian people—sewing machines, electric lamps, electric fans, radio receivers, sugar, vegetable oil products and cigarettes—went up much faster, their increases varying from 1.9 times (vegetable oil products) to 9.6 times (sewing machines) their output in 1950. Most of these goods are still

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little more than curiosities to the masses of the people.

This pattern of industrial production corresponds to the foregoing analysis. It reflects the unduly large diversion of resources into heavy industries to the neglect of agriculture. The pattern of consumer goods production reflects the anti-social income shifts and the vastly larger improvement in the well-being of the upper income groups as compared with the masses of the people, the well-being of the latter remaining stagnant at best.

Most of the industrial expansion has taken place in defiance of the doctrine of comparative costs; it is forced by official policy, rigorous import restrictions and exchange controls. The unsalability abroad of Indian sugar surpluses because of the heavy price differential—the price of Indian sugar is about $242 per ton as against the world price of $66 per ton—is an example of the unconscionably heavy costs of industrialization in a closed market. Fertilizer, penicillin and refrigerators provide other examples. The landed cost of imported penicillin is 2¢ per million units, while the estimated cost of production in India is 26¢ per million units. The import of refrigerators is banned. The cost of a refrigerator in India is about $473. The cost of a comparable refrigerator in England is about $190. These are but a few instances of what applies extensively to the whole range of industrial production in India, though there may be striking exceptions here and there.

The wastages of forced industrialization are examples of what we may term "Walt Disney economics." Manifestations of waste may be seen in abundance in those under-developed countries which have embarked on the "exciting national pilgrimage" of "development" through "planned" industrialization, on which their economic salvation is believed to rest. Productive resources, which are extremely scarce, are devoted to fabricating commodities at home which may be imported—in unlimited amounts, in superior quality and at prices vastly lower than those charged for the poor quality home products. Were free competition permitted, the domestic manufactures would have little or no chance against the imported products. But the domestic manufactures are protected against this competition by autarchic policies reinforced by exchange restrictions.

A unique phenomenon of interest to this discussion is the vast gap between the landed costs and the market prices of virtually the whole range of import goods; these gaps have emerged as a consequence of inflation, an unrealistic exchange rate and exchange controls. The gaps vary from 30 per cent to 500 per cent or more of the landed costs, depending upon commodities. These price gaps are a rough measure of the unmerited windfall gains which accrue to the recipients of the import licenses; of the near-ransom prices paid by domestic consumers for imported goods and for their domestic substitutes; and of the waste of resources in producing goods at home which may be had much more cheaply through imports. If the resources thus wasted were employed in export industries with comparative cost advantages, the national product would rise commensurately. Such a policy would also put a stop to the prevailing anti-social income shifts from the general body of consumers to the holders of import licenses, dealers in imported goods and industrialists fabricating domestic substitutes for imported goods.

It is bad enough to produce goods at home which may be acquired at much lower costs from abroad. However, when the domestic output exceeds the demands of the home market, the surplus is sold abroad at knock-down prices subsidized by the government. The manufacturer-exporters have their losses made good by cash payments and other benefits which the government grants to certain categories of exporters as part of its "export promotion" schemes. Apparently, the under-developed countries are prepared to pay any price, however fantastic, to foster the growth of industry and "a technologically mature society." It is interesting to note that a part of this

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price is paid by the industrially advanced countries in the form of massive "developmental" aid to the under-developed countries.

The phenomenal pace of progress in the industrialization of India is thus not a matter to be enthused over. It is a species of Pyrrhic victory. Obviously, the consumer does not stand to benefit from it. To continue the example of the refrigerator, what good can accrue to him to get mulcted of $473 and receive but a refrigerator in exchange, when, if imports were unrestricted—as in the pre-Plan days—he could not only have had a much better refrigerator, with fewer breakdowns and a longer life-span, but would still have had about $280 to furnish the kitchen with other goods.

Forced industrialization has been detrimental to the national product and to the expansion of employment, through the callous and wasteful disposal of resources which it has produced. Resources have been diverted from sectors where they produce greater output into sectors where real costs are higher and returns lower. It has been estimated that an additional investment of $2.1 million would yield a gross yearly output of $1.2 million to $1.4 million in agriculture and a gross output of $0.3 million to $0.9 million in five manufacturing industries —cement, paper, iron and steel, cotton textiles and sugar, the output in iron and steel being $0.4 million. The same amount of investment would provide employment for 500 persons in large-scale investment goods industries, 1,150 persons in large-scale consumer goods industries and 4,000 persons in agriculture and small-scale and household industries. To press the development of heavy industry in such a context is uneconomic and seems inhuman.

Historically, advances in agriculture appear to have almost always preceded industrial expansion, and progress in lighter industries to have preceded the development of heavy industry. Growth of agriculture provided a broad-based demand for the output of industry, and the growth of light industry provided an assured demand for the output of heavy industry. This pattern of economic development, one sector sustaining and aiding the progress of the other, would eliminate the present wastages and so contribute to a more rapid growth of the Indian economy.

Planning in India, however, has amounted to a reversal of this natural process. We are developing heavy industry ahead of light industry—among the latter, throttling the growth of cotton textiles, the most important consumer goods industry, accounting for about 36 per cent of industrial output—and developing both at the expense of agriculture. This topsy-turvy progress is inherently unstable. Persistence in such a policy might render the Indian economy more vulnerable to setbacks. The edifice that is being built might run into a storm, and it could even come crashing to the ground, if its principal support, foreign aid, should be drastically curtailed or withdrawn. If, on the other hand, production and international trade had been allowed to be directed by the basic economic forces of comparative costs and efficiency, India might have had both progress and stability. Indian national income might then have increased at a much faster rate than it actually has, perhaps at 8 to 10 per cent per year. This possibility is well supported by the striking economic and social progress made by countries—like West Germany, France, Italy, the Netherlands and Japan —which have pursued liberal economic policies.

STATIST TAMPERING with the market mechanism in the name of "planning" has brought on us the worst of both worlds—the evils of planning and the evils which the market mechanism produces when tampered with. The consequences of statist tampering have been the opposite of its intentions; we have had, if anything, an *increase* of poverty, unemployment and income inequalities. Statist policies might have been abandoned before now but for the intervention of three factors.

First, generous foreign aid—$479 mil-

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lion or 6 per cent of the outlay of the First Plan and $3.1 billion or 19 per cent of the outlay in the Second Plan—seems to have more than compensated for the prodigalities of "planning." The actual significance of foreign aid is much greater than these percentages might indicate. The dollar amount of Plan outlays is given here as converted from Indian money at the highly over-valued official exchange rate of the rupee. To measure the real significance of foreign aid to the Indian economy, it must be assessed in terms of the market prices of the goods imported by its means. On this basis, foreign aid may represent 11 per cent of total investments in the First Plan and 33 per cent of total investments in the Second Plan. Currently, this percentage may be very much higher. Despite reductions in domestic saving, foreign aid has raised investment from 7 per cent of national income at the end of the First Plan to 11 per cent at the end of the Second. That per capita income has, nevertheless, remained semi-stagnant, is testimony to investment extravagance, wastages and corruption. To put it bluntly, our socialist policies in India are being supported by the savings of free societies overseas.

Secondly, the thinking behind statist policies, though much of it is fallacious, and empirical evidence against it is growing, has received considerable moral support from visiting economists. Their chits carry great weight with the Indian public.

The Indian public has been assured by others that inflation, born of a big Plan, could be contained if an abundant flow of foodgrains was provided under U. S. Public Law 480. This assurance is given on the ground that foodgrains constitute the major part of the budget of the average Indian laborer. The Government of India seems to have accepted this assurance. India has also been told by Professor J. K. Galbraith that there was no "alternative to extensive public enterprise;" this has been interpreted as expert blessing on the Indian policy of unrestrained expansion of the public sector. The latest appreciative pat is from Dr. T. Balogh, which comes after a two-month sojourn with kindred souls in a monastery at Calcutta. Dr. Balogh has commended "Soviet planning" for India, and he was confident that we might undertake this without damage to democracy "thanks to the great authority which the Prime Minister wielded." He has also certified that Indian "economic thinking" was ahead of that of the rest of the world, though it is not clear whether this applied as well to the unrepentant adherents of a free society.

Somehow, visiting economists to this country, being hand-picked, have a habit of belonging to a certain economic persuasion. Professors Milton Friedman and P. T. Bauer were the exceptions which prove the rule. It is time that the Indian public had the advantage of hearing the views of those opposed to statism.

This is not to argue against foreign aid or against a voluntary Point Four program. The need for accelerated capital formation is obvious. However, if the burden of debt-service is not to break our back, aid must be channeled into the best among alternative investments. The best investment, the one which contributes most to national income, it must be noted, is not always the most spectacular. However, there seems to be no easy device to guarantee that aid will be so channeled in the absence of fiscal and monetary stability.

There is little hope of a reversal of the socialist policies of the Indian Government unless foreign aid is scaled down or abandoned—which might happen only in the event of the aid-giving countries' running into serious trouble —or, unless the aid-giving countries adopt a positive foreign aid policy, linking aid to domestic economic, fiscal, monetary and social reforms. Though the linking of foreign aid to domestic policies may present many challenges to diplomacy, there is a precedent to such a linkage; the International Monetary Fund requires assurances of appropriate domestic policies before borrowings from a country's third and fourth allotments are agreed to.

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We seem to be living in peculiar times. Freedom-loving people, in the name of preserving and spreading freedom, are unwittingly financing and otherwise sustaining socialist policies which thus far —sensational projects and schemes apart —have yielded little else than social injustice, unemployment, poverty and conflict. Though the Indian planners and their overseas supporters are full of promises and hope, these policies can hold out prospects of nothing better for the future.

WE MAY NOW summarize the principal conclusions emerging from this discussion:

1. Judging from its four principal objectives and taking an overall view, statist economic policies have not been a success in India.

2. During the 11 years ending 1961-62, Indian national income rose by 47 per cent, or 3.6 per cent per year. However, this figure is misleading as evidence of Indian progress in overcoming poverty. For a more reliable measure, it must be deflated by the rise in population, the unduly large output of non-consumer goods, the creation of excess production capacities, the unduly large accumulation of inventories, the unmerited and illicit income shifts from the masses of the people to the upper-income groups, and the use of the general price index, which understates the actual price level, in computing national income at constant prices.

3. Progress in the welfare of the people in recent years is best reflected in the statistics of food and cloth consumption. Since 1952-53, the per capita consumption of food has fluctuated downward, being below the jail ration of 16 ounces per day most of the time; the nutritional norm is 18-19 ounces. The per capita consumption of cloth, which improved until 1956, has since declined, from 14.66 metres in 1956 to 13.98 metres in 1960.

4. The gain in employment from planning has been negative. The expansion of employment has fallen short of the natural growth of the labor force. The volume of unemployment has thus grown despite a more than doubling of Plan investments, from $7.9 billion in the First Plan to $16.6 billion in the Second.

5. Since planning began, the pattern of income distribution has probably become more unequal than ever. Statism in India has involved concentration of power in the Administration—in the politician and civil servant—on a Himalayan scale. It has centralized in the state control of over two-thirds of national investment resources, including foreign aid, and colossal powers of control of economic activity through licenses, permits, quotas and concessions. Anti-social income shifts are inevitable under statism. The magnitude of these anti-social income shifts may be of an order of $1.6 billion per year.

6. Alone among the four objectives of planning in India, industrial production has shown remarkable progress, the index of industrial production rising by 92 per cent in 10 years. However, much of this progress is in defiance of the doctrine of comparative costs. By diverting resources from other sectors of the economy, principally agriculture, where returns are vastly higher, it has detracted from a maximization of the national product, and, therefore, from the pace of progress in overcoming poverty and unemployment. In the context of a semi-stagnant agriculture, this development has rendered the Indian economy highly vulnerable to setbacks. The unstable structure that is being erected might topple over if its principal support, foreign aid, should be drastically cut or withdrawn.

7. Statist policies in India might have been abandoned long ago, but for the intervention of foreign aid, which kept the coffers of the prodigal replenished as they got depleted, the moral support lent to statist policies by visiting "experts" from overseas, and the colossal gains in money and power which these policies yield to the politician and civil servant.

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Red China's Great Leap Backward

MICHAEL F. ZAREMSKI

TILLMAN DURDIN, in his introduction to *Report from Red China,* relates that when sixteen-year-old Mao Tse-tung was on his way to enroll in a school some distance from his home, he met a small boy walking with an old man. Liking their companionship, but irked by their inability to keep up with his steady pace, he derided them and provoked the youngster to tears with his incessant, scornful cries of "Faster! Faster! Faster!"

In a broad sense, this episode characterizes the whole attitude of the Chinese dictator with regard to the 700 million people he rules. With unrelenting, brutal determination, he led his unwilling followers into a complete program of rapid collectivization and industrialization, which, leaving no sector of Chinese life untouched, brought the country "even one step beyond the Soviet Union" on the road to the pure Communist state. But despite the heady optimism with which the project was launched, it proved a dismal failure, and now, after the disastrous flirtation with Communism-in-practice, the Chinese economy is again languishing in chaos.

The country Mao Tse-tung took control of when the Communists conquered the Chinese mainland in 1949 was one which manifestly showed the results of thirty years of civil war and almost a decade of Japanese incursions. Cities were in rubble; the countryside, ravaged by the unpredictable floodings of the Yellow River, the Yangtze, and the Huai, lay in waste; and the few industries, concentrated in Manchuria, were decimated when the departing Soviet occupation troops dismantled most of the machinery and brought it back with them into Russia. Compounding these difficulties was China's perennial problem, agriculture.

The basic cause of the country's farm troubles can be traced to the lack of arable land. While mainland China encompasses 9.6 million square kilometers of territory, only an estimated 250 million acres are cultivable. Per capita land distribution in pre-war China was only 0.45 acres, as compared with 2.01 in Russia and 8.04 in the United States.[1] Since almost 90 per cent of the population earned their living from the soil and the Chinese rules of inheritance dictated that land be distributed among all a person's heirs, farm units were kept small. In 1933, the average land holding was 4.23 acres, while at the same time it was 39.74 in Denmark, 77.30 in England and 156.85 in the United States.[2]

The Communist remedy for the situation was not long in coming. The first few years after their seizure of power witnessed the first stage of the "great agricultural experiment," the liquidation

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[1] A. K. Chiu, "Agriculture," in *China,* edited by H. F. MacNair (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1946), p. 468.

[2] J. L. Buck, *Land Utilization in China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1937), pp. 267-69.

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of the large land holdings and the execution of the landlords and other "Counter-revolutionaries." Estimates of the total number of landlords killed range from a conservative figure of 3 million — based on official estimates — to upwards of seven times that sum.[3] That done, the Agrarian Reform Law of 1950 was adopted, establishing the complex machinery whereby the confiscated land — 117 million acres—would be redistributed among 300 million farm laborers and poor peasants.

But China's Red rulers have never left much doubt about the real purpose of agrarian reform — as a necessary preliminary stage in their program for China's industrial development. Immediately before the adoption of the Agrarian Reform Law, on June 14, 1950, Liu Shao-chi, then the chief theoretician of the Party, commented:

> The basic reasons for and the aim of agrarian reform are different from the view that it is only designed to relieve the poor people. . . . The results of agrarian reform are beneficial to the impoverished laboring peasants, helping them partly to solve their problem of poverty. But the basic aim of agrarian reform is not purely one of relieving the impoverished peasants. It is designed to set free the rural productive forces from the shackles of the feudal ownership system of the landlord class in order to develop agricultural production and thus pave the way for New China's industrialization.[4]

No sooner had the land been divided and subdivided into small, individual plots than the Communists initiated a new program designed to help the Chinese to discover the inefficiency of small-scale farming. The peasants were now subjected to a new propaganda line exhorting them to join "mutual aid teams." By thus pooling their resources, so they were instructed, they could benefit from the increased knowledge of modern farming methods and could have access to costly mechanical implements otherwise beyond their means.

The Chinese Communist Party then adopted a resolution establishing the Agricultural Producers' Co-operatives. Under this system the peasants pooled their labor, tools and livestock, worked the land jointly, and were paid a part of the crop-yield in proportion to the value of the material they originally "invested" in the co-operative.

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[3] Sripati Chandra-sekhar, *Red China: An Asian View* (New York: Praeger, 1961), p. 24.

A former Chinese government and party official estimates that "conservatively speaking, in each of the more than two hundred thousand villages *(hsiang)* in China, an average of five landlords were killed and another five were terrorized into committing suicide. This totals more than two million people." Chow Ching-wen, *Ten Years of Storm* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1960), p. 105.

Another observer states: "The Communists issued many sets of figures when it came to summing up the results of their Campaign against Counter-revolutionaries in October 1951. In some areas they gave precise numbers while in others their figures were vague and suggested inadequate statistical work. . . . It is worth while to cite a few of the figures given by the Communists in order to point up the intensity of violence involved in this campaign.

"In his report on the situation in the Central-South Region on 21 November 1951, Teng Tzu-hui stated that from the winter of 1949-50 until November 1951 more than 1,150,000 'native bandits' had been inactivated and that 28 percent of these or 322,000 had been executed. These were figures for only one of the six major administrative areas in China. The *Southern Daily* in Canton reported that in the ten months between 10 October 1950 and 10 August 1951, 28,332 'criminals' had been executed in Kwangtung province. The figures published for October 1949 to October 1950, before the drive to eliminate counter-revolutionaries got under way in earnest, are illuminating: a total of 1,176,000 were liquidated in four of the six administrative regions, according to the chairmen of the regions involved. Yet according to statements of Communist officials themselves the campaign did not assume major proportions until 1951. By 1952 Peking no longer reported in such detail on the number of people liquidated; the figures were being used against the Communists on the world propaganda front.

"It is on the basis of these incomplete figures and others provided by the Communists that the Free Trade Union Committee of the American Federation of Labor estimated in October, 1952 that the Mao regime had been responsible for the deaths of more than 14,000,000 people over the previous five years. This total included more than 5,000,000 executed in the rural areas and more than 2,600,000 executed as 'bandit agents' or counter-revolutionaries. It is difficult to keep in mind that these are human beings rather than mere statistics. . . ." Richard L. Walker, *China Under Communism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955), pp. 218-19.

[4] Chandra-sekhar, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

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The program, which began inauspiciously with 300 experimental co-operatives in 1952, soon burgeoned. By 1953, 14,000 units had been established, and the next year the number rose to over half a million. In 1956 there were 1,300,000 such organizations in operation, encompassing, as the Communists boasted, over 90 per cent of the peasant households. Thus the peasant was suddenly and unceremoniously deprived of the very land which a few years before he had been given with so much fanfare and at a cost of so many lives.

This step taken, the next was viewed by the Communists as inevitable; it was "the logical result of the march of events." In August, 1958, the Chinese Communist leadership approved a measure calling for "The Establishment of the People's Communes in the Rural Areas." The land was totally communized, private property nearly completely eliminated, and the workers fully regimented. What was to be the final stage in the "great agricultural experiment" was reached.

THE DRIVE TO modernize China's economy through industrialization was carried forward with no less brutal determination. The first aim of the Party's leadership was the re-establishment of the factories in southern Manchuria, a goal achieved through a provision of the treaty of alliance signed between the Soviet Union and the Chinese People's Republic in early 1950, by which Moscow agreed to lend Peking $300 million in five yearly instalments. Then, in January, 1953, Chou En-lai announced China's first Five-Year Plan, an ambitious program of forced industrialization to be carried out with Russian administrative and technical assistance.

Under the Plan the Communist leadership called for all available capital and labor to be directed into the development of heavy industry, machines, fuel and electrical power, with little channeled into those sectors of the economy producing consumer goods. Over the five year period, according to official statistics, 58.2 per cent of the total capital investment of $18 billion went into industrial projects, with only 7.6 per cent going to agriculture, forestry and water conservation. Moreover, of the total industrial investment, 88.8 per cent went into heavy industry, leaving 11.2 per cent for light industrial projects. As a result of this order of priority, China, at the end of the first economic plan, could boast of factories making automobiles, electrical equipment, machine tools and military goods, while such staple commodities as wearing apparel were in short supply and of poor quality.

Nonetheless, if the low priority given to consumer commodities produced an unfortunate situation, the results of the concentration on capital good industries were impressive. The total value of industrial output at the end of the five year period exceeded the original goal by 21 per cent — 141 per cent higher than in 1952. The average annual rate of growth was planned to be 14.7 per cent; it actually surpassed 19 per cent.[5] Steel production, for example, which was 1.35 million metric tons in 1952, reached 4.45 million tons in 1956, thereby passing, a year ahead of schedule, the original target of 4.12 million tons.

Yet despite the rapid and in some cases startling gains made under the first Five-Year Plan, the program manifested numerous signs of inefficiency and waste. In August, 1954, the *People's Daily* (Peking) published an article which revealed that "the products of a number of machine-producing factories have a rate of wastage as high as 40 per cent, with only a very low passing grade in quality.[6]

A more graphic account of inefficiency was carried in that same publication in February, 1955. In a story describing a government inspection of a machine shop in Shenyang, the following was noted:

> The safety devices were not functioning properly. . . . Some of the drills stopped working within 20 seconds after being started — electrical switches did not function well; some

[5] Cheng Chu-yuan, *Communist China's Economy, 1949-1962* (South Orange: Seton Hall University Press, 1963), pp. 132-33.

[6] Paul S. H. Tang, *Communist China Today* (New York: Praeger, 1957), p. 301.

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sliding surfaces could not be lubricated properly; the gears made a great noise; and the shaft cases leaked oil. Closer examination revealed that many of the parts did not comply with the specifications. Iron filings, dirt, and sand were found in the moving parts. A further check showed that all of the drills and drill presses of these two models on hand in the stock room were defective.[7]

Accounts of similar situations appeared too frequently in the official press to discount the above as isolated cases.

UNDER THE SECOND Five-Year Plan, announced in 1957, priority continued to be given to heavy industry, though the growth rate for this sector of the economy was now revised downward. The growth rate for agricultural output, on the other hand, was set at 10 per cent above the corresponding rate for the 1953-1957 period.

This increased agricultural quota underlines one of China's more pressing problems: In order to finance her industrialization projects, marketable grains and raw materials must be exported from the mainland. But population increases continually absorb any gains in agricultural production; how then is additional revenue to be accumulated? The answer, as the Communists worked it out, was to order output raised, give a lower percentage of income back to the local authorities, and divert more and more money into reserve funds to be distributed by the central government for top-priority industrial projects. After the communes were established, the point was reached where only 20 per cent of the total income reverted to the commune, with the remainder invested in the industrial program. The still further decline of the living standard of the peasant and the stifling of local initiative were defects in the system which Peking either could not or would not recognize.

But these difficulties, compounded by waste and inefficiency in the administration of the program, soon assumed alarming proportions, and in an apparent about-face, China's rulers reversed the system, allowing the local bureaucracy to utilize a large percentage of the commune's income. Counting on a great burst of enthusiasm on the local level, Peking announced, in 1959, the beginning of the "Great Leap Forward." Under this program, the peasant laborers, in addition to working at their regular communal jobs, were expected to devote their "free" time to such occupations as making cement in backyard kilns, operating neighborhood steel furnaces, mining coal in small, otherwise unproductive seams, or working with teams on public works projects.

While oppression was still the order of the day, opposition could not be stifled among the peasants. Reports conspicuously appeared in the Chinese press relating such anti-regime activities as work slow-downs, deliberate damage to property, attacks on local cadres and the slaughter of livestock.

In an obvious attempt to put down the government's increasingly vociferous "rightist" critics, Chou En-lai was forced, in late 1959, to declare that the commune system "was in fact very good and not at all a terrible mess . . . , that its rise was not premature."[8]

The actual agricultural and industrial production figures, however, failed to support his case. The second Five-Year Plan called for a 12 per cent increase in the value of agricultural output during 1960, but the crop-yield failed by far to match this goal. Three successive years of bad harvests, in 1959, 1960, and 1961, depleted whatever supply of food China had, forcing her to import a great quantity of grain from abroad to feed her soldiers and other security personnel. In addition to these difficulties, by mid-1961 the livestock population had fallen by 40 per cent. In October, 1961, the *People's Daily* (Peking) was forced to admit that "three consecutive years of grave natural disasters have resulted in the reduction of agricultural production" and this has "affected light industry production and also heavy industry and consequently commodity supplies and the people's livelihood."

[7] *Ibid.*

[8] *Wall Street Journal*, March 10, 1960.

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Industrial output during the 1959-1962 period *decreased* by more than 30 per cent. Steel production, estimated at 15 million metric tons in 1960, dropped to about 12 million tons in 1961, and below 10 million tons in 1962. Coal output in 1962 was about half as much as in 1960.

Consumer industries fared no better. As late as October, 1962, an official government statement declared that "the goods we produce are still insufficient to meet the needs of the rural people." Industry must "increase the variety and raise the quality of products," it advised.

There can be no doubt that the institution of the commune system was the major factor in the deterioration of China's whole economy. In their major policy statements, the Red leaders declared that the nation's economy would thrive because of the benefits to be gained from the "rational" use of land and labor and unified planning and management. Yet, as it happened, it was precisely for these reasons — and others — that China's economic structure collapsed.

For the Chinese leadership, with their advocacy of rapid and large-scale industrialization, "rational" use of labor meant pulling every possible man off farming projects and putting him to work building up heavy industry. While this sector of the economy may have benefitted from the move, the effect on agricultural production was disastrous. The shortage of farm workers, confessed the *People's Daily* (Peking) in 1960, was the main cause of the devastation of grain fields that year. Further, as the correspondent of the *London Times* reported,

> Some of the measures taken to stimulate grain production imply that it has not been drought and flood alone that are to be blamed, but the misuse of manpower in the communes. The excesses of backyard steel were corrected when the steel was found to be useless . . . . the small-scale factory production of the communes was one of the great claims made for the new system of human organization and it is these factories that seem to have drawn off too much able-bodied manpower so that grain production has suffered.[9]

[9] *London Times*, September 27, 1960.

Similarly, centralized planning also proved to be extremely damaging. In an effort to achieve uniformity in farming techniques and management throughout the country, Peking issued sets of regulations which totally ignored the differences necessarily existing between one locality and another. Peculiar needs were sacrificed to an impossible goal; the results of the indiscriminate advocacy of such techniques as "close-planting" and "deep-plowing" were evident in the final production figures.

Another aspect of communal life contributing to the agricultural crisis was the fact that in the commune there was no incentive to make the peasant want to work harder to fulfill the promises of the "Great Leap." To be sure, the workers were driven hard to meet production goals; but when every worker gets the same payment for his work, when all live under the same conditions and eat the same amount of food, there are few who will do more than the bare minimum necessary to gain admission to the communal dining hall. Those who had had high production levels lost all incentive; those who were slothful or unskilled remained so or become worse.

Even more damaging to the economy as a whole was the anti-specialist attitude manifested by the Party bureaucracy. The expert was held in reproach, and book learning was described as "a heap of garbage;" scientific achievements born in the West were similarly condemned as worthless.[10] Party officials were given the managerial jobs on the farms and in the factories; it did not seem to matter if they knew what they were doing so long as they followed the Party line in doing it.

The absence of trained technical personnel in positions of authority wrought devastating results, especially in industry. Gross mismanagement was in evidence everywhere; doctrine-bound party cadres, more interested in meeting goals on target dates than in building securely, embarked on impractical schemes and fostered poor production standards. Mechanical equipment in factories was badly made and improperly operated. When

[10] *Wall Street Journal*, February 2, 1962.

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machines broke down, they remained inoperable because there were no spare parts available for repairing them.

THESE LESSONS were not entirely lost on the Chinese Communist leadership. The first signs of a change in Peking's policy line were manifested in October, 1959, when the basic unit of agricultural production was shifted from the commune to the production brigade, similar in size to the former agricultural co-operative. Ownership of land, tools and draft animals was given to the smaller unit, which divided its income among the members of the group without any consideration of the other brigades. Thus, in an effort to gain more production through increased incentive, the much vaunted egalitarian feature of income distribution was repudiated.

A step farther was taken in the spring of 1961 when the brigades were subdivided into production teams. Incentive wages tied to productivity were given laborers, and small plots allowed them for individual cultivation. Moreover, the village "free-markets," where the peasant could sell certain commodities for personal profit, were re-established.

Early in the year, evidence of a drastic reform of China's whole economic program came out of the ninth plenary session of the Communist Party's Central Committee. Ordering a reduction of capital outlays for heavy industry, it initiated a policy of "consolidation, adjustment and filling out" for the country's economy; henceforth, agricultural production would be emphasized. The plan, calling for "diligence, thrift and hard work," was reiterated at the meeting of the People's National Assembly in April, 1962.

The degree to which China's rulers have repudiated the "Great Leap" was underlined in an article which appeared in an issue of *Hung Chi,* the official organ of the Party's Central Committee. The gist of the piece was that industry would have to make do with the labor resources and machinery now at its disposal; no sizable new capital investments would be forthcoming.

Factories were called upon to "unfold technical innovation in existing enterprises and bring out fully the potentials of existing equipment. . . . By this method labor productivity can be raised rapidly and effectively with little investment."

Significantly, the article went on to say that "the process of realizing socialist industrialization can only be a gradual process, and the process of improving working equipment, too, can only be a gradual process." "Real results," it added, "can be obtained only if we consider the problem of mechanization and automation on the basis of the present level of industrialization."

Reluctantly following capitalist example, the author of the article advised the institution of a system of rewards and penalties tied to production: "Special material incentives should be given to individuals and units for special accomplishments in production. . . . Necessary economic penalties should be imposed on individuals and units for poor production because of insufficient subjective effort."[11]

Indicative of the seriousness of Red China's continuing agricultural crisis is the fact that the country's rulers have had to forsake their political dogmatism in an effort to avoid widespread famine and disease by importing grain from the West. While the government has insisted that economic necessity would never force it to compromise its position, the Chinese pattern of trade in recent years would seem to indicate otherwise.

Since 1959 general trade with the nations of the Soviet bloc has been halved, mainly because neither Russia nor her European satellites, plagued by farming difficulties of their own, have been able to supply China with the massive aid she requires. The only recourse left the Chinese Communists was to turn westward, which they have been doing with increasing frequency.

In 1961, for example, Red China signed a three-year, $362 million trade agreement with Canada, and negotiated other contracts with Australia, France, Argentina and a number of other Western

[11] *New York Times,* September 20, 1962.

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nations. To pay for this grain a high percentage of China's exports has gone to Western Europe, Canada, Hong Kong, Southeast Asia, and even Japan, with whom the Chinese had broken off trade relations for political reasons in 1958.

But an even more radical policy change — and one which is certain to have widespread effects — may be in the making. For the grain reserves of the nations with which China is now trading are rapidly shrinking. If the agricultural output on the mainland cannot be considerably increased in the very near future, the only country which has food supplies large enough to be able to give sizable assistance to China is the United States.

CERTAINLY, THE MAJOR problem now facing China is her population, presently expanding at a rate of from 2 to 3 per cent annually, and calculated to exceed 800 million before the end of the decade. At present, however, the problem is one which the dogmatic Communists cannot even acknowledge: unemployment.

When the emphasis in the economic program was shifted from industry to agriculture, the hordes of peasants forced into the cities were no longer needed. With the withdrawal of Soviet assistance,[12] a multitude of various projects were cancelled and factories closed down. In addition, those factories which remained in operation were ordered to cut personnel to the barest minimum.

The Chinese leadership pursued the only course left open: to effect the mass transfer of these workless peasants back to the country. The already over-populated and impoverished rural areas, however, had neither need nor room for more people, and even with the current emphasis on farming no work could be found. Many of these people thereafter resorted to begging and stealing, becoming a source of constant discontent among the rural populace.

While the Chinese Communists rode into power on their pledge to remedy the agricultural situation, an examination of pre-war conditions as compared to those of today reveals that in actuality their program of compulsory collectivism has radically aggravated rather than alleviated the problem; the peasant could never boast of his condition, but it was even worse now.

In 1956, for example, the Communist leadership initiated a large-scale program of water conservation. But:

> As most of the canals and reservoirs were dug and constructed without proper geological investigation or technical design, the new projects not only destroyed the natural irrigation system and hindered the regular function of the main rivers, . . . but also made roughly a million acres of arable land alkaline.[13]

Whereas before the canal construction the area of flood and drought had never exceeded 30 million acres, it now increased to 38 million acres in 1957, 78 million in 1958, 108 million in 1959, and 150 million acres in 1960.[14]

These errors in economic planning had their effect on the Chinese peasant, whose living standard was reduced to the lowest recorded level. Official statistics for 1956, the peak year of the first Five-Year Plan, reveal that per

[12] An editorial on the subject of Russia's withdrawal of assistance appeared in the *People's Daily* (Peking) on July 19, 1963. It revealed that the ordering home of all the Soviet experts and the cancellation of numerous Russian contracts was totally "unexpected" and inflicted "incalculable difficulties" on China's economy.

[13] Cheng Chu-yuan, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

[14] *Ibid.*

"By 1959 the *People's Daily* sensed something was wrong: 'During the past one or two years, the alkalization of much soil in many irrigated areas in the North is spreading.' But the canal digging went on. In 1960, the same paper again reported that saltpetre, which normally appears only in serious drought, had affected millions of acres of farmland. In April 1961, the *Kuang Ming Daily* said: 'Arable land is continuously shrinking and alkali soil spreading.' In August 1962, the Party's authoritative mouthpiece *Red Flag* reported that nearly 20 million acres of farmland in Manchuria and in the North, Northwest and Central China had turned alkaline, and that the peasants were unwilling to till the swiftly alkalizing farms which soon became barren land, thus reducing the already limited arable land of the country." Valentin Chu, *Ta Ta, Tan Tan (Fight Fight, Talk Talk): The Inside Story of Communist China* (New York: Norton, 1963), pp. 66-67.

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capita annual consumption amounted to only $35. Personal consumption in 1957 was estimated to have been 18 per cent below the figure for 1933.[15]

Caloric intake has also shown a marked decrease. In 1957, the per capita intake was set at 1,830 units daily, as compared to 1,940 for 1933. While the 1933 figure indicates bare sustinence level, the food ration allowed in 1957 was 110 calories lower, and thereafter steadily decreased until in late 1961 a diet of 600 calories was average.[16]

Above the appreciable reduction in their already pitiable standard of living, the Chinese have suffered more acutely from something else, something more intangible though no less important — the dehumanizing character of the Communist system.

A dispassionate picture of this aspect of life under the "Great Leap" is drawn by Robert Loh, one of three sons of a successful Chinese businessman, who, while enjoying a secure position as a university instructor, underwent the familiar infatuation-disillusion-despair process that marks the life of many living under totalitarian tyranny. "Any worker who lived through the Great Leap," he writes,

> knows that the campaign had the effect of suppression. The people were made to work constantly to the very limit of human endurance — and in many cases beyond. . . . It was as though the authorities, in a vicious fury at the antagonism shown them by the people during the blossom period, had sentenced the whole population to the slave gangs of labor reform. Proof of the punitive nature of the campaign was in the fact that people from the other classes and strata who incurred the Party's disfavor were sent as *punishment* to 'learn from the masses' by giving their labor along with the workers and peasants.[17] (Author's emphasis.)

THE CHINESE EXPERIENCE demonstrates a number of economic facts of life which especially the under-developed countries would do well to take into careful consideration. Coercion of the populace, bureaucratic mismanagement, shoddy work, economically unsound experiments, public apathy or outright opposition — all diminished where the free market is allowed to operate — are commonplace in China.

Any government worthy of the name seeks economic progress primarily as a means of raising the standard of living of its citizens; China has sought it as a springboard to recognition as a world power. To their detriment, the Communists have ignored the individual, the key to economic progress. While the Chinese leadership has often been forced to reverse their policies, they have in no sense repudiated the communes of the "Great Leap." It is almost certain that similar projects will be launched in the future; it is likewise certain that they, too, will meet an ignominious fate. George Santayana wrote, "He who does not learn from history is condemned to repeat it;" those nations seeking economic progress should be mindful of the experience of post-war China.

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[15] Cheng Chu-yuan, *op. cit.*, pp. 159-60.

[16] *Ibid.*

Newsweek reported on March 27, 1961, that the average rice ration in the commune, originally 12 ounces daily, had then been cut to 4 or 5 ounces, about one bowlful. It added that visitors reported that the people blamed the government, not nature, for this situation.

Writing of more recent conditions, Valentin Chu commented: "A normal man in Asia requires a minimum of 2,300 calories of food daily. In food-short India, according to a United Nations survey, the daily average food intake is 2,000 calories. In pre-war China it was 2,234 calories. In Taiwan it is 2,310 calories. Most of the peasants in Communist China, who must work long hours at hard labor, have been getting about 1,000 calories." Chu, *op. cit.*, pp. 72-73.

[17] Robert Loh, as told to Humphrey Evans, *Escape from Red China* (New York: Coward-McCann, 1962), pp. 369-70.

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Skinner's Behaviorist Utopia

BRUCE GOLDBERG

THAT A STATEMENT or a theory is true or false is a matter which is, presumably, to be decided by the employment of the various canons of scientific (in the widest sense of that term) observation and inference. A theory, for example, is tested by its ability to explain the facts on the basis of which it was introduced, and also by its ability to explain new facts which were not explicitly taken into account in its construction. And there are considerations irrelevant in determining the acceptability of putative truths. One obviously irrelevant factor is the aesthetic satisfaction anyone might get from contemplating a given theory. Whatever the poet may have thought, beauty is not the same as truth. Less obvious, and perhaps worth mentioning for that reason, is that the moral consequences of a statement are not relevant determinants of its truth or falsity. It may be that the general acceptance of some statement would lead to universal misery. Conceivably this could be a reason for keeping the statement secret. It could *not* be a reason for concluding that it was false. All men *are* mortal, whatever *Angst* might be occasioned by recognition of the fact.

That these considerations are not truth determinants would seem to be hardly susceptible of dispute. And yet, without explicit avowal, antagonists of scientific theories have all too often allowed aesthetic or moral upset to count against those theories. The Einsteinian conception of time as a relativistic magnitude did indeed shatter a well-established *Weltanschauung*. The relatively simple picture of Newtonian mechanistic interactions embedded in an absolute temporal framework died hard. That death, however, should have been an easy one. The major test of a scientific theory is its ability to explain the phenomena, and the new theory was better at this than the old. And for most (although not absolutely all) physicists, this was enough. But for others—theologians, philosophers, aestheticians, even laymen (though certainly not for all the members of any of these groups)—this was not enough. The aprioristic defenses of the old order began. "It's perfectly self-evident," ran one defense, "that time is absolute throughout the universe. One simply can't conceive of it being any other way." "It's in the nature of time," ran another, "to be the same everywhere." And in the background was the—unexpressed—objection that the adjustment was too difficult to make, that the new picture was not anything so much as repulsive.

Nowhere does this anti-scientific resistance to new theorizing assume more vigor than with respect to explanations in psychology. While physicists may displease, they are in possession of a mathematical apparatus which frightens. The critics, for all their resistance, re-

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main more or less quiet and, at times, even a little ashamed. However, the language of, say, Freudian theory is ordinary English (or German). The technical terms are no more awe-inspiring than those of a competent aesthetician: "drive cathexis" is no more intimidating than "aesthetic distance." This releases inhibitions, and the defenders of received opinion feel that they have a free hand.

But there is a feature of psychological theory more important in this connection than that its propositions are unmathematized.[1] Psychological theory concerns people. It attempts, among other things, to explain why they act the way they do. And often the answers are such that the actor would not unreflectively acknowledge their correctness. Further, the critic may have a stake in the answers' being incorrect. How often has Freudian theory been attacked because of its "repulsive" doctrines of infantile sexuality? Or on the ground that our traditional views of human responsibility would have to be discarded? But such objections are absolutely worthless. The repulsiveness of Freudian theory is no more relevant to its truth or falsity than its country of origin. But it is one thing to point up the utter irrationality of an objection, and quite another to dispel the fears which prompt it.

As objectionable as Freudian theory was, however, it was sufficiently anthropomorphic to pose less of a threat to "man's dignity" than the mechanistic view associated with a certain other psychological theory. While Freud, the standard version goes, moved the springs of action from the conscious mind to the unconscious, later twentieth century psychology removd it from the psyche altogether. This new dehumanization of man is called behaviorism. Behaviorism not only eliminated the mental as a factor—it combined this with a thoroughgoing determinism which left no room for free action at all. The moral conscience revolted. Behaviorism was castigated as evil, and therefore, presumably, false. But the argument is no more legitimate here than it was in the preceding cases. Behaviorism simply cannot be shown to be incorrect by showing that its alleged consequences are undesirable, morally repugnant, or even evil. Those who adopt this approach deserve our ears no more than the critics of another theory, who insisted that man's dignity required that his planet be at the center of the universe.

THESE OBSERVATIONS ON what is relevant and what is irrelevant in the evaluation of a scientific theory such as behaviorism are necessary, for in this essay I shall be concerned with the behaviorist-based recommendations for social organizations of Professor B. F. Skinner, the eminent Harvard University psychologist, as set forth in his utopian novel, *Walden Two*.[2] If his proposal for a society rigidly controlled by behaviorist psychologists is to be rejected (as I think, in reason, it must be), it will have to be on the basis of logical analysis, and not of foolish sloganizing.

The blurb on the book informs us that *Walden Two* "provocatively pictures a society in which human problems are solved by a scientific technology of human conduct—and in which many of our contemporary values are obsolete." That anyone has presented us with a solution for human problems should make us listen, especially when the donor is a psychologist of unquestionable achievement. If in the end we will be skeptical, no part of the cause should be lack of gratitude for the attempt.

Walden Two is an attempt, in fictional form, to outline a system of social organization based on behaviorist psychological theory. "The methods of science have been enormously successful wherever they have been tried," Skinner says in another place;[3] "let us then apply them to human affairs." The scene of most of the book is a utopian community (Walden Two). Frazier, the creator

[1] I am, of course, ignoring those areas of psychology where mathematics is becoming increasingly important, e.g., learning theory.

[2] Originally published in 1948. I have used the paperback edition published by Macmillan in 1962.

[3] *Science and Human Behavior* (New York: Macmillan, 1953), p. 5.

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of the experiment, defends his theories of social organization against Professor Burris, a slightly skeptical but generally sympathetic antagonist, and Professor Castle, a tender-minded philosopher and a bumptious, nasty, and unreasonable caviller, who interrupts the discussion from time to time with generally strawmannish objections.

A good deal is said in this novel, and I shall not try to examine every point that is made. What I shall do is consider certain of the central ideas of *Walden Two*, on the falsity of which the claims of the book would founder. Occasionally I shall bring to bear illustrative evidence from one of Skinner's nonfiction works, *Science and Human Behavior*.

The initial picture of the inhabitants of Walden Two with which we are presented is an attractive one. "These were delightful people," Professor Burris muses; "their conversation had a measure and a cadence more often found in well-wrought fiction than in fact. They were pleasant and well-mannered, yet perfectly candid; they were lively, but not boisterous; affectionate, but not effusive" (page 28). And in the course of the book, we come to learn that the inhabitants of Walden Two possess most of the desirable character traits one can think of and almost none of the bad ones. Indeed, with the exception of Frazier himself (who did not have the benefit of a Walden Two upbringing) everyone seems to be supremely happy and well-adjusted. This is not to be scoffed at. Only those with no social concern at all (and they don't count) could be indifferent to the possibility of establishing a form of social organization which has such results.

How does one go about producing such desirable characters? Well, babies at Walden Two are reared in community nurseries. At the age of one year, they graduate to community playgrounds, being subjected during these formative years to an intensive and highly scientific program of conditioning. All this provokes much resistance from the antagonistic Castle. But the questions of the techniques of Walden Two seem to me less interesting than the question of whether Skinner has even provided a coherent account of what can be accomplished by those techniques. If that account is itself internally inconsistent, the details are unimportant.

What I mean is this. Skinner's general program is the behavioral conditioning of certain kinds of emotions and behavioral responses. This conditioning is to have the result that only certain kinds of emotions appear in the members of Walden Two, while others, the undesirable ones, disappear through lack of positive reinforcement. The result is lots of people with good emotions, and very few or none with bad ones. It might immediately be objected that this could never come about, that human nature cannot be changed, or something of the sort. But this Castle-type move is a bad one. Talk about human nature is far too vague to permit a reasonable decision to be made as to whether or not it could be changed.

"As to emotions—we aren't free of them all, nor should we like to be. But the meaner and more annoying—the emotions which breed unhappiness—are almost unknown here, like unhappiness itself. We don't need them any longer in our struggle for existence, and it's easier on our circulatory system, and certainly pleasanter, to dispense with them" (page 101). To the objection that emotions are fun, Frazier replies, "Some of them, yes. The productive and strengthening emotions—joy and love. But sorrow and hate—and the high-voltage excitements of anger, fear and rage—are out of proportion with the needs of modern life, and they're wasteful and dangerous. Mr. Castle has mentioned jealousy—a minor form of anger, I think we may call it. Naturally we avoid it" (page 102). And so it is conditioned out, along with the other unpleasant emotions, presumably simply by never receiving any positive reinforcement on any occasion of its occurrence. This is the account one must examine, not, I should add, to determine whether or not it would be *advisable* to condition out the emotions referred to but to determine whether such a conditioning out would be even a theoretical *possibility*.

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The behaviorist picture (at least as Skinner presents it) is in some ways an excessively simplistic one. There seems to be the idea that, with respect to any given person and the various emotions he is capable of experiencing, one could, given a proper technology, pluck out some while leaving the others intact. Occurrences of emotions are, on this account, something like pains. Just as one can eliminate a given pain (by administering a drug, say), so one can eliminate a given emotion (by a proper administration of behavioral engineering). In this sense, the account of the emotions is an atomistic one. Each emotion can be considered separately, and the relevant conditioning techniques can be applied to it. The good ones stay and the bad ones go.

THIS PICTURE IS A radically misconceived one, and it requires no experimentation at all to show this. Is it even possible to become clear about what the picture suggests? Skinner wants to retain joy (because it is productive) and eliminate sorrow (because it isn't). Under what circumstances might one experience joy? Well, suppose one has not seen one's mother for twenty years. One goes to meet the plane on which she is expected to arrive. The door opens, she descends the stairs and comes running to meet one, arms outstretched, tears in her eyes. Presumably, on this occasion one is happy, joyful, and the inspiration provided enables one that very evening to make some important new contribution to knowledge.[4] But suppose that just as one is about to embrace one's mother, an unknown assailant shoots her in the back. Doesn't one then feel at least sorrow, or even grief? Is one neutral? Indifferent? Isn't it obvious that joy and sorrow are not atomistic states with no stronger connection than that they are both emotions? If the death of one's mother (in the situation described above) did leave one indifferent, how *could* the embrace produce joy? In order for one to experience joy in the situation described, it must (logically must) be true that whether or not one's mother lives or dies makes *some* difference to one. But if that's true, then one could not remain indifferent if she does die.

Perhaps another example will make the point clearer. Skinner is pro-happiness. The people in Walden Two are a happy group. They are often engaged in creative enterprises, and they are happy in their work. But unhappiness is unproductive. Presumably it's also to be conditioned out. Again, the question arises about the theoretical possibility of such a state of affairs, i.e., a state of affairs in which people are only happy. Suppose I have been working on a project for ten years, have constructed an elaborate theory which has only to receive its final experimental confirmation. The laboratory technicians bring in the results of a series of experiments which they have been running for the past two weeks. Now what is Skinner's claim? Am I indifferent to the results of my experiments? Suppose I am. In that case, it's odd to say that I'm very happy, even overjoyed, when I learn that my theory has been confirmed. Suppose that I'm not. Then it's equally odd to say that I'm not even a little bit unhappy when I learn that the experiments have falsified the theory. Given that people sometimes fail to achieve what they want very much (and not even *Walden Two* promises to fulfill all desires), it follows that they are sometimes unhappy. Isn't it patently obvious that happiness and unhappiness are not independent atomic states? But if that's true, then it doesn't even make sense to suppose that one could condition

[4] For joy, Skinner tells us, is a productive emotion (page 102). This seems hardly to be a "scientific" remark. What is it for an emotion to be "productive"? Is the view something like that joyful people do more productive work than sad ones? Is there any empirical evidence for this? Skinner provides no experimental evidence; and even if one were to make a historical survey which showed that joyful people are, in fact, more productive than sad people, that wouldn't establish the claim. Their greater productivity might be attributable to all sorts of other factors. But Skinner probably doesn't mean anything as precise as this. More likely, all he means by calling joy a productive emotion is that he has a favorable attitude towards joy and not towards sorrow. In any case, nowhere are any criteria presented for what is to count as a productive emotion.

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people never to experience the one and always (or almost always) to experience the other.

The principle illustrated by these examples is that many emotions have what might be called quasi-logical counterparts. Pairs such as love-hate, joy-sorrow, happiness-unhappiness are familiar. To suppose that (whatever technique one might employ) one could condition out one member and leave the other intact is to believe a fiction. And this has nothing to do with the nature of man or the limitations of scientific technique. It is, rather, a matter of the logic of emotional predication. "Whenever a particular emotion is no longer a useful part of a behavioral repertoire, we proceed to eliminate it," Frazier tells us (page 103). Presumably, on this account we could, if we wanted, "engineer" a person to feel only grief or only love or only nostalgia. We decide which emotions we want, and then instill them. But this is something we shall never be able to do (at least not in the way implied in *Walden Two*). And the reason is that to say that we can do it doesn't even make sense.

The above is not mere philosophic pedantry. One of the attractions of *Walden Two* is that it seems to offer us an escape from the unpleasant, and this through the application of an allegedly scientific theory. But that theory, whatever its other merits, cannot at least succeed in this. If the inhabitants of Walden Two can experience joy, then they can experience sorrow. And it is a logical mistake to suppose that things could be otherwise.

WE HAVE, THEN, eliminated one major piece of the theoretical groundwork of *Walden Two,* at least as Skinner views his system. There is another view advanced by Skinner, of even greater importance than the view that one can selectively condition emotions. This is the idea that free will is an illusion. Skinner regards a behavioral technology as being incompatible with free will. Since he regards the former as possible, he denies the latter. Now, the problem of free will is an enormously complicated one. What I shall try to do here is merely to show that Skinner's view of what it would mean to have free will is a confused one, and that nothing he says even tends to show that free will is an illusion.

Skinner regards adherence to the idea that man has free will as essentially a relic of pre-scientific ways of thinking. And this is a fairly widespread notion. Without discussing the merits of this claim—my own opinion is that it is much too vague for argumentation on either side—it might be worthwhile to see just how Skinner proposes to demonstrate the falsity of the free will doctrine. In a way, this is a difficult thing to do, for Skinner seems not altogether clear about what view he is attacking. Sometimes it is the view that human actions are spontaneous, at other times it is that their actions are the actions of responsible agents, at still other times it is the view that human actions are uncaused. This last is probably the most substantial, so let us deal with that one. Skinner argues that it is a mistake to regard actions as uncaused. The most we are justified in saying is that for various actions we do not know what the causes are. However, the advancing march of science gives us every reason to believe that in time the causes of human behavior will present no greater problem than the causes of heat transfer in gases. The issue of free will is often discussed in these terms. That is, those who assert that we have free will generally regard this as committing them to the view that human action is uncaused. Those who opt for a general determinism regard this as implying that human action is unfree.[5] One of the unfortunate aspects of this controversy is that both sides seem to have thought that they had pretty clear ideas about the meaning of the key expression, i.e., determinism. The allegedly unproblematic explication of this notion has most often been: "the theory that every event has a cause." But a number of

[5] There have been exceptions in the history of philosophy. Hume and John Stuart Mill accepted both determinism and free will. But this is no place for a historical account of the question.

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contemporary philosophers have seen that this explication is by no means as clear as has been thought. Some have gone so far as to assert that they do not know what the thesis of determinism is.[6] And there is good reason for this. For example, if one sees how Skinner fills out his account of what determinism with respect to behavior is, one cannot but find it surprising that he does regard the truth of determinism as incompatible with human freedom.

In Chapter Three, "Why Organisms Behave," of *Science and Human Behavior*, Skinner says that "we are concerned . . . with the causes of human behavior. We want to know why men behave as they do. Any condition or event which can be shown to have an effect upon behavior must be taken into account. By discovering and analyzing these causes we can predict behavior; to the extent that we can manipulate them, we can control behavior" (page 23).

Initially such a picture of a general determinism of behavior seems to many people to be a frightening one. The suggestion is that we are mere ciphers in a causal stream over which we have no control. And this is a picture to which Skinner frequently alludes in a favorable way in the course of his writings. We can manipulate causes and control people. A Brave New World (if one is frightened) or a Walden Two (if one is pleased) looms up before us.

But is there reason, given Skinner's view (which is a widely held one), for either fear or pleasure? Is there, indeed, anything excitingly new being said?

What are the causes of behavior on Skinner's showing? "Any condition or event which can be shown to have an effect upon behavior. . . ." Suppose I am a devotee of Shakespeare and a friend tells me that a new production of *King Lear* has just come to the Lido. Excited, I rush down to reserve tickets for the next performance. Now it is unquestionably true that my friend's informing me that the play was being performed is an event which had an effect on my behavior. If he hadn't told me I wouldn't have done what in fact I did do, *viz.*, go to the theater to reserve the tickets. Of course I might later have learned on my own that the play was being performed and would have then bought the tickets, but I wouldn't have done that when, as a matter of fact, I did. Suppose that I go to the play, and, after having thoroughly enjoyed it, applaud wildly when the performers take their curtain calls. Again, the appearance of the performers on the stage is an event which had an influence on my behavior. If they hadn't come out I would have returned home without applauding, wondering what went wrong, and perhaps feeling a bit sad because I didn't have the opportunity to show my appreciation. We have here, then, two examples of events which had an influence on my behavior. Were they causes of it?

It is not altogether easy to answer this question. For Skinner, of course, the answer is clear. They *are* causes. According to the quoted passage *any* condition or event which has an influence on behavior is a cause. But there are difficulties. Consider another kind of case. I tell someone, "I was just in the psychology laboratory with John and I caused his leg to rise." When asked how, I reply that I hit his knee in the familiar spot with a small hammer. But suppose that, when asked how I caused John's leg to rise I reply, not that I hit his knee with a small hammer, but that I asked him if he would raise his leg. Ordinarily, we would say that if *this* is how I got John's leg to rise (by asking him to raise his leg), then I didn't *cause* his leg to rise, although what I said was certainly relevant to bringing it about that John's leg did rise. It would at least be misleading, under these circumstances, to say that I did cause his leg to rise. In a context like this one, it would in general be assumed that if I *caused* John's leg to rise, I did something which in some way put it out of John's control that his leg did rise. When this assumption turns out to be wrong, i.e., when it turns out that I simply asked John to raise his leg and he did so, then it sounds very odd indeed

[6] Cf. P. F. Strawson, *Freedom and Resentment* (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), p. 187.

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to say that I caused his leg to rise. This is not always true. If John were hypnotized and raised his leg at my command, then it would be perfectly in order for me to say that I caused what occurred. One can easily think of other cases in which it wouldn't sound odd to say that I caused John's leg to rise. But in the case where I simply ask John to raise his leg (and he's fully conscious—not hypnotized, etc.), it does. But why should this be true if, as Skinner says, a cause is *any* condition or event which can be shown to have an effect upon behavior? Why does it sound at all odd to say that the performers' appearing on the stage *caused* me to applaud?

Above I hinted at what seems to me to be at least a partial explanation. It seems to be a legitimate inference that if someone is caused to do something, then that thing is in some way out of his control, that he is in some way not at liberty not to do it. And Skinner appears to be aware of the legitimacy of this inference. Notice that he says that to the extent to which we can manipulate behavior we can *control* it. If I am controlling someone's behavior, then he certainly isn't. This is surely the source of the doctrine that if someone's behavior is determined, then he isn't free. If the behavior is determined, then it's caused; if it's caused, then it is out of his control; and if it is out of his control, then he's not free. Assuming this argument to be legitimate, then one cannot at the same time grant that a bit of behavior was determined and that it was free. From the fact that the behavior was determined, it would follow that it was not free. But does it follow from the fact that there were events which *influenced* the behavior that the behavior was unfree? Put in another way, from the fact that the agent was influenced by certain circumstances to act in a certain way, does it follow that the action was out of his control? As we ordinarily speak about behavior, this certainly does not follow. Let us take still another example.

One of the factors influencing a general's decision to attack may be the intelligence information that the enemy is shortly going to concentrate its forces against his weak flank. Is his subsequent behavior (giving instructions to his subordinates to attack, preparing certain false reports which he is going to allow to fall into enemy hands, etc.) something which is out of his control? Surely not. Such a situation is just the sort of situation in which we say someone's behavior *is* under his control. Under what circumstances would we say that his behavior was out of his control? Well, suppose that he received the intelligence information and instead of calmly preparing plans for the coming attack, went berserk. Suppose he ran out of the Command Headquarters raving about the imminent destruction of his forces, and ordered each individual soldier (with or without a weapon) to attack the enemy at once. Suppose, too, that he himself starts running in the direction of the enemy camp, knife in hand, screaming that he is going to kill the mad beasts. Here, most probably, we would say that his behavior was not under his control. Surely our estimate of the situation must be different when he calmly sits down to prepare the attack, and gives his subordinates intelligent instructions, involving what, in the opinion of all, is a master military move. And yet there are events which influenced this behavior, just as there are events which influenced the berserk behavior. But if we allow that, in the case of the intelligent action, simply from the fact that there were indeed events which influenced his behavior it does not follow that the behavior was out of his control, then we must either reject the argument that causality implies non-freedom or reject Skinner's assumption that any event which influences behavior is a cause of that behavior.

And indeed how would one go about trying to show that any event which influences behavior *is* a cause of that behavior? Skinner, in the passage I quoted, seems to want to do this by definition. But this can show absolutely nothing. Presumably Skinner must regard the assertion that all behavior is, because determined, unfree, as an interesting assertion about behavior, i.e., about actions which people perform.

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That is, presumably he doesn't regard the contention that behavior is unfree as a simple definition. For if it were a mere definition, then while we might agree (accepting his definition for a moment) that "behavior" will imply unfreedom, we could not say about any of the events which we normally call cases of human action that they were in fact cases of "behavior."

Let us assume, then, that the statement at issue is not a simple definition. Now, to say that behavior is determined, is to say that it is caused. Therefore, by the original argument, caused behavior is unfree. And if any event or condition which influences behavior is a cause, then behavior which is to any extent influenced by events or conditions is unfree. What is it to say that a bit of behavior was influenced by an event or condition? Presumably, that the event or condition would be relevant in explaining why the behavior occurred, why the man acted as he did. From all of the above, it follows logically that the only behavior which *could* be free is that behavior for which there is no explanation at all. The only behavior which could be free is that behavior which is completely irrelevant to the circumstances in which it occurred, in the sense that nothing could be brought to bear to explain why the agent acted as he did. And from this it follows that every case of goal-directed behavior (that is, behavior in which the agent acts to achieve some end) is, to the extent to which the end was relevant to his behavior, *unfree*. And finally, it follows that all behavior, in so far as it is rational, is unfree. This, I submit, is absurd, for if behavior is unfree, then it is impossible that it be rational. Any argument which has as its conclusion the assertion that all rational behavior is unfree (in the last analysis, *because* it is rational) must be rejected. Skinner's argument about free will thus results in a palpable contradiction. His reasons for thinking that free will is an illusion are no reasons at all.

I have spent a good deal of time on what might be called the philosophical underpinning of *Walden Two*, the two theses, namely, that it is possible selectively to condition emotions and behavior, and that all behavior is unfree. If the truth of these theses were granted, much (though not all) of what Skinner recommends would be extremely difficult to deny. Mere charges that it is all diabolical would, in this case (and actually, in any case), be pointless. Now that we have seen that they are false, we can go on to see how they lead to the advocacy of Walden Two.

IN WALDEN TWO, things are controlled from the top. There are various managers (of play, of social activity, of work, etc.) who decide what sorts of enterprises are conducive to the psychological welfare of the members of the community, and are therefore to be permitted. The society is thus a rigidly controlled one, and the reason is that "when a science of behavior has once been achieved, there's no alternative to a planned society. We can't leave mankind to an accidental or biased control" (page 264). Why, one might ask, is the only alternative to planning (controlling) the lives of people by Skinnerian managers that of leaving them to the (accidental and/or biased) control of others? The historical tradition of liberalism would seem clearly to have shown us another alternative, that of letting people shape their own lives as they see fit. But, it should by now be clear, this is not an alternative which Skinner, in terms of the framework he has constructed, could even suggest. Since all behavior, whether we like it or not, is, in fact, controlled, we might as well let it be controlled by the good guys. Why is all behavior controlled? In the last analysis, because there are events and conditions which influence that behavior. Because of his mistaken idea that no behavior can be free, Skinner is rendered incapable of seeing the distinction between planning someone's life and letting him plan it himself.

This is a most important point. *Prima facie* there would seem to be two alternatives (with lots of gradations in between)—either people are controlled, or they are not. But for Skinner, this last is not even a possibility. The argument

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about free will makes it impossible that anyone is uncontrolled. The only real alternatives are good control and bad control (page 263). But this is simply the product of a bit of sham reasoning. What, one wants to ask, do you say about the possibility of establishing a society in which people are not subject to a rigid conditioning process in the hands of "behavioral engineers," but in which they are able to encounter many and diverse influences and make up their own minds about which they regard as the more important and which the less? Skinner's answer is clear. This, he would presumably say, is just the situation I am trying to avoid; it is the one I was talking about when I described a situation in which there was accidental and biased control.

It seems to me that therein lies, for the superficial reader, the main attraction of *Walden Two*. Only the unreasonable would prefer a system of biased and accidental control to one of intelligent control. Walden Two is, after all, better than Russia. It is to expose the view that these are our only choices that I spent as much time as I did examining Skinner's argument about free will.

In actuality, there are a number of alternatives open to us who would recommend a form of social order. There are at least the three just alluded to: a Russian system controlled from the top by foolish and arbitrary men, a Walden Two in which this control is exercised by intelligent men of good will, and an uncontrolled society.[7] These are, of course, not the only alternatives, but if we recognize the fallaciousness of Skinner's free will argument, we see that there are at least these three.

And, granting that Walden Two is preferable to Soviet society, we must raise the question concerning whether it is better than an uncontrolled one. Frazier, in effect, raises this very question, ". . . what do you say to the design of personalities? Would that interest you? The control of temperament? Give me the specifications, and I'll give you the man! . . . Let us control the lives of our children and see what we can make of them" (page 292). Notice that Skinner relies, in characterizing his own alternative, on the view which we discovered earlier was not even coherent. It is not true, irrespective of the techniques one employs, that one can generate people according to any arbitrary list of specifications: one could not (logically) make people who were only happy. But leaving this aside, the question is whether we should allow a central committee in control of society consciously to design personalities. *Prima facie* the answer to the question would seem to depend on which values the central committee is concerned to instill. It might seem that if these values are good ones, then we can accept Skinner's recommendation, and that if they are bad ones, we should reject it. What are the character traits and social values which Skinner accepts? In general, they are the very best. Happiness, productivity, lovingness, etc. This is another reason, I suspect, for the attraction which *Walden Two* exerts. If the answer to the question *did* depend on whether or not Skinner's choices were good ones, then there would be little more to say.[8] But it does not. What must be decided is the question of the desirability of a controlled society.

An initial question, preparatory to deciding the matter, might be the following: given that we can produce artists, scientists, musicians, at will, how could anybody reasonably decide about the desirable proportions? This seems to be the sort of value question which the behavioral scientist is in no better position to answer than any of the rest of us. Suppose that the behaviorist were to reply

[7] It should be clear that by uncontrolled society I don't mean one in which there is no control over behavior. Obviously, a society which prohibits certain acts (e.g., murder) is to that extent controlling behavior. By an uncontrolled society, I don't mean an anarchic one. This is not the place to enter upon an extended discussion of the semantics of "control." For my purposes it is enough to say that by an uncontrolled society I mean one in which the sorts of control that are characteristic of both Walden Two and Soviet society are absent—thought control, thoroughly propagandized education, etc.

[8] Of course, in this discussion I am accepting something which I spent much time earlier in denying, *viz.*, the possibility of creating people to order.

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that this isn't a value question at all. It's purely an economic matter, i.e., the question is one of the allocation of resources: we want to provide the people in our behaviorist utopia with the maximum possible satisfaction of their various desires, and our decision about what sort of people to produce (artists, musicians, scientists, etc.) will depend not on our values, but on the values of the community.

Now there would be difficulties in proceeding in this way. I mean that the behaviorist in his controlled socialist society would have the same problems in the effective allocation of resources as any other socialist planner. But this sort of objection is, at this point, not the relevant one. Can we really allow that, as far as we have presented it, the behaviorist's problem is one of resource-allocation? I think not. Remember that the important idea about Walden Two is that we are conditioning values, i.e., likes and dislikes. We are not simply taking an arbitrary society and discussing the question about how best to satisfy the needs of that society given its (and not our) set of values. What this means in the present case is that the problem about how many musicians to produce is not an economic question. We are deciding not merely how to satisfy desires—we are deciding what those desires shall be, i.e., we must decide how many people are going to want to hear music, how many people enjoy art, etc.

Thus the behavioral scientist is faced with a question of value, a question of the order in which various goods are to be placed on a preference scale, and the behavioral scientist is in no better position to resolve this problem than we are. Indeed what criteria *could* be employed to decide such a question? This is surely not a scientific question, in the sense that there are generally accepted ways of finding out the answer. *finding out* the answer. The very best one could do is suggest an answer, and that answer will be an expression of the particular value scheme embraced by the suggester. There is no reason at all to suppose that the behaviorist is possessed of any expertise in this matter which is denied to the rest of us.[9]

IT BEGINS TO LOOK as though distinctly unscientific elements of arbitrariness (which arbitrariness, remember, Skinner was concerned to avoid) are being introduced into the design of the behaviorist utopia. But there are further difficulties. Skinner argues that a free society (in the ordinary sense) is an extremely undesirable thing. The reason is that all sorts of elements of arbitrariness and haphazardness are introduced by people pursuing incompatible (and often unpraiseworthy) goals. The various efforts which these people make in the attempt to persuade their fellows that the goals are desirable ones are causal factors which can change, in the last analysis, the value orientation of that society. This arbitrariness, the possibly of bad values being substituted for good ones as a result of the free (again in the ordinary sense) interplay of competing goals, is perhaps the chief evil against which *Walden Two* is directed. This is *the* reason Skinner advocates a controlled society.

We must then investigate whether or not it is *possible*, even on Skinner's terms, to eliminate arbitrariness in this sense. Let us suppose that we have a scientific procedure for determining not only how to condition various abilities, character traits, and values, but

[9] While Skinner seems to be vague enough on how questions of value are decided in Walden Two, he is at least candid in admitting that science plays no part in the decisions. "The philosopher in search of a rational basis for deciding what is good has always reminded me of the centipede trying to decide how to walk. Simply go ahead and walk! We all know what's good, until we stop to think about it" (page 159). If Skinner means by this that universal agreement can be obtained on what is and what is not good, his statement is obviously false—suffering, promiscuous sexual behavior, etc., are things concerning the goodness of which a Christian and a hedonist might well disagree. But even assuming that we could cleanly separate good from bad things, this would in no way solve the problem of the behavioral engineer. Since he is charged with arranging the value systems of the members of society, and since very often a choice must be made among good things (at the very least because they can't all be realized at the same time), he must have a good idea of the order in which goods are to be ranked among themselves — which are the more important ones, and which the less. This problem scarcely permits of a ready answer.

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also for determining which ones we *should* condition. Now, it is not so easy to know what we are supposing here. With respect to musical ability, for example, are we supposing ourselves to be conditioning general ability in this area, ability at baroque music, ability at Bach, Vivaldi, or what? The same question arises for musical tastes. Do we condition people to like baroque music or do we condition a fondness for music in general? This is by no means an academic question for the behavioral engineer. We shall see that his failure to solve this problem will result in the emergence of new values in society, which the behaviorist psychologist cannot have taken into consideration in his scheme of conditioning, and for the control of which he will have to resort to methods which have nothing of the respectable air of science about them.

We can distinguish various levels of what we might call value generality, and the behavioral engineer must decide, assuming him to have the suitable techniques, on which level to operate. For purposes of the discussion, we might call music in general the first, or highest, level of generality; the various periods —baroque, classical, romantic, etc.—the second level of generality; particular composers, the third level; and so on. Let us call an ability or a liking on the first level an $Ability_1$ or a $Value_1$, and so on.

Now the question is: at what value or ability level are our conditioning procedures supposed to operate? Presumably the behaviorist is not going to condition each miniscule preference or ability in each member of society. I mean he is not going to decide that so and so many people should be devotees of the late Beethoven quartets, and that so and so many people are going to be admirers of Bach piano sonatas played without the pedal. Let us assume, then, that conditioning procedures are going to be applied at the first level: we are going to produce so and so many musicians, so and so many artists, etc. We are not going to produce as a matter of deliberate policy a given number of baroque pianists, a given number of impressionists, and so on. Thus, $Value_2$ choices are not, as the $Value_1$ choices are, the direct result of policies and practices instituted by the planners.

This is the situation we are envisaging. What could we reasonably expect from such a situation; what would be the natural result of this absence of $Value_2$ conditioning? Well, one thing we could reasonably expect would be that, in an important sense, $Value_2$ would not be anything like as stable as $Value_1$. While the number of people who have musical interests and abilities is something that we can expect to be constant (because we are fixing it) the number of people who like any *kind* of music and the number who are skilled in the production of any *kind* of music is something that is likely to vary.

So, to restrict ourselves to this specific case, we can expect there to be periods in which one sort of music is in the ascendancy and periods when this sort of music is replaced by another in the favor of the inhabitants of the society. More interesting is the fact that we can expect *new* values to be created on this level. Since, to the extent to which values on this level are unconditioned there is an area for what we might call a free interplay of competing values, there is reason to expect that there will be some sort of building on what is already in existence. Gifted musicians will see the possibility of innovating, of building upon the stock of values and knowledge which they already possess, in the same way that this was done in the old society, in the way, for example, in which Mahler is said to have built on Wagner, and Schoenberg on Mahler. And we can also expect that some of these innovations will receive acceptance on the part of some of the music lovers of the society. Remember that we are supposing their $Value_2$ choices to be unconditioned.

Thus new and unplanned values have come into existence in the society. What interest, if any, should the planners take in this fact? Presumably they are going to be very interested indeed. After all, this new sort of music, when it is performed, is going to be one of the causal factors influencing the behavior of the inhabitants of the society. And there

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will be all sorts of factors, on this level, which will be determinants of the behavior of the inhabitants of the society—new art forms, new ways of painting, new ways of writing and performing plays; innovations in technology; new ways of building homes, new alloys for use in such building. The possibility of a literally endless number of changes in the established order opens up. These new elements are going to be competing with each other for the attention and approval of society at large. Were the planners to step back disinterestedly from this development the very element of arbitrariness and randomness which Skinner was concerned to eliminate would reappear.

So the planners must act. If it could be shown that some new Value$_x$—some new style of painting, for instance—was likely to have what in the judgment of the planners would be an adverse influence on the populace, it must be stopped. The whole point of the society is that such adverse influences are to be eliminated. Thus, control is introduced at this lower level of value generality.

OR IS IT? When we speak of "control" at this level are we speaking about the same sort of thing with which we began? The answer is no. In our initial attempt at describing the behaviorist utopia, how did we suppose control to be introduced? What counted as control? Clearly, it was the conditioning of certain likes and dislikes, certain abilities and character traits. This is what Skinner seems to mean throughout *Walden Two*. This, for Skinner, is an innocuous sort of control. The planners of the society are not acting against the wishes of the members—they are shaping those wishes. People do what they want to do, although what they want to do is determined by what some others want them to want. It is in this sense, for Skinner, that Walden Two is a controlled society in which all the inhabitants are free. But the control of which we are now speaking is nothing like this at all. It consists simply in the proscription, by the authorities, of certain kinds of activities. If the planners decide that a certain type of music is likely to have an injurious effect, they will forbid it. This is political control pure and simple.

Interestingly enough, Skinner admits that control of the kind takes place in Walden Two (page 164). If someone in the society comes up with something new, he does *not* try to bring it about that the society at large accept his innovation. He goes to the relevant planning board. It is there that the decision about the acceptability of what he has done is made. If the planners decide against his idea they will prohibit its circulation. Thus is met the threat of "arbitrariness."

It is of absolute importance to recognize the difference between control in this latter sense and behavioral conditioning. *Walden Two* seems to present us with a picture of a society in which the ordinary, "nasty" elements of political control are absent. I suppose that many readers of the book have found this to be one of its most attractive features. But, as we have shown above, this is an illusion. As long as the planners of the behaviorist utopia do not condition values and abilities down to the last thinkable atom, it will be absolutely necessary to control the society (in the ordinary sense) in order to insure that the chosen values maintain their supremacy. Whatever merits Walden Two may have, the absence of rigid political control is not one of them.

This last point obviously raises the question of freedom, now in the political sense, and not in the sense of freedom of the will. Skinner argues that the former question is one that finds an easy solution in Walden Two. If people do what they want to do (whether or not their wants have been selected by someone else) then they are free. Suppose we accepted this account. Would it then follow that the inhabitants of the behaviorist utopia are free? Surely not. Consider a citizen of the society going to the planning board convinced that his new idea will result in enormous progress in sundry fields. He wants (if the word is not too weak) to have the idea introduced. But after many hours of pleading with the planners (whom he comes to look on, at least in part, as

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thick-headed), he is turned down. He asks, as a last desperate move, to be permitted to give a public address on the merits of his new scheme. This too is turned down. The planners, we may suppose, feel that any propagation of the ideas they have just heard will have a markedly deleterious effect on the rest of society. This sort of situation is clearly possible in the behaviorist utopia. Skinner admits as much when he says that new ideas will have to be cleared through the relevant planning boards. But the situation we have described *is* a situation in which someone is not allowed to do what he wants to do. Thus we can grant Skinner all he asks for (in the way of a definition of freedom) and still the society he envisages is an unfree one. Not only are wants and desires (on some level) conditioned by the behavioral engineers, but any deviation from the established pattern is suppressed by those behavioral engineers when it does not accord with their own views. Walden Two may now begin to look, not like an excitingly new departure in the theory of social organization, but like an old-fashioned totalitarian society of a kind with which we are already familiar.

Thus we have seen that at every important stage in the argument for the behaviorist utopia, the position adopted by Skinner is one that cannot be maintained. But let us suppose now that none of this was shown. Let us suppose, that is, that Skinner's argument, up to this point, has been a good one. Would even that show that his recommendations are worthy of acceptance? Is a controlled society (assuming that it can do most of what Skinner says) a desirable thing? Again, I submit, the answer is no. But, given our assumption, it is not possible to show this by pointing up internal contradictions in the theory behind Walden Two. We are assuming, in some vague sense, that Walden Two can "work."

Is a working Walden Two a more desirable social organization than a free society? The answer to this question obviously depends, in part, on the sort of criteria one employs in assessing the merits of a particular form of social organization. Given certain ends, Walden Two *is* more desirable. Frazier indicates, in the course of his advocacy of Walden Two, that an important feature of the society is that it provides the opportunity to make controlled social experiments. Obviously, Walden Two would provide a more effective medium in which to conduct controlled social experiments (of a certain kind) than would a free society. But this is, after all, a rather restricted goal. And the fact that it is so restricted renders it untenable as a justifying goal for a form of social organization. One doesn't construct a society for the purpose of experimenting with its members. Skinner recognizes this, and what he regards as justifying the society is something else. Walden Two is supposed to represent an extremely progressive society, and one remarkably well adapted to achieve the goals set for it. It is in these terms that the issue between Walden Two and a free society must be discussed.[10]

ONE OF THE MOST important criteria by which we judge societies, of course, is a great degree of satisfaction of material wants—that is, the society must be an economically successful one. And the economic question is especially important in regard to Walden Two: much of the glamor of the life there proceeds from the fact that the inhabitants, having to work no more than four hours a day, have a great deal of leisure for the pursuit of culture and general self-improvement. Unfortunately, I am afraid that there is not much use in discussing this aspect of Skinner's ideas. He states, in his book, that the economics of a society are "child's play," and, indeed, he proceeds to deal with economic problems much as a child would. His ideas here are simply naive socialism, of the silliest sort. One example: once in a while, the children in

[10] Of course, a free society does not have goals set for it in the same sense that Skinner's controlled society would, for there is no one in a position to set goals for everyone else. All we mean here by the goals of a free society are the ends which, in considering it, we would like it to achieve.

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Walden Two are sent out into the world and given a

> sort of detective assignment. The game is to establish a connection in the shortest possible time between any given bit of luxury and some piece of poverty or depravity. The children may start with a fine residence, for example. By going in the service drive they may be able to speak to a colored laundress hanging out clothes. They induce her to let them drive her home. That's enough [page 206].

Enough for what? To prove that all wealth in a free enterprise system is gotten unfairly? To prove that wealth in a society is like a pie, and that if some have more others must necessarily have less? Does Skinner know what an economic cost is, and that there are fortunes to be made by entrepreneurs who can discover ways of cutting costs which their competitors have not yet realized? Does Skinner know that there exists a question of the practicability of rational allocation of resources in the absence of a market for capital goods—in such a situation as obtains in Walden Two, for instance? Offhand, one would have considered an economics primer required reading for a society-builder. But in any case, the economic problems of a utopian socialist community are much beyond the scope of our discussion here. Let us, therefore, pass on to the more general question of social control vs. the decentralization characteristic of a free society.

I have mentioned that Skinner admits the necessity for political control over new ideas. This concession occurs in his discussion of the "Walden Code," a system of maxims regulating the conduct of the members of the community in an incredibly detailed way: the Code even governs how introductions between people are to be made, establishes what is to count as rudeness in a conversation and prohibits (for the sake of psychological health) the deliberate expression of gratitude between members of the society. Now, in regard to this Code, Skinner states:

> As to disagreement, anyone may examine the evidence upon which a rule was introduced into the Code. He may argue against its inclusion and may present his own evidence. If the Managers refuse to change the rule, he may appeal to the Planners. But in no case must he argue about the Code with the members at large. There's a rule against that.[11]

What this involves, then, is that every innovation in social life will have to gain the approval of the behavioral engineers. Thus, the distinction between Walden Two and the open society becomes as clear-cut as possible, and we are in a position to introduce what is probably the chief argument for freedom.

Let us attempt to state this argument in the form of an analogy—the analogy between society as a whole considered as an organization for the acquisition and communication of knowledge, and any given semi-organized field within society serving the same functon. If advances in social knowledge (in the best ways of meeting the problems that arise in human life) are best promoted by a system of rigid controls such as Skinner's why not apply this system to science and the arts? If we established a commission of the best physicists, say, who would decide what lines of thought subordinate physicists would be allowed to follow up, is it likely that breakthroughs in this science would be as frequent as in these past centuries of "anarchy," when each physicist has done as he wished? In other fields, to cite illustrations is virtually to close the case as far as these disciplines are concerned: who would wish that Bradley and Bosanquet — the outstanding British phi-

[11] It ought to be pointed out, incidentally, that the "scientific" nature of Walden Two is always stated rather than shown. That is, Frazier's defense of a particular practice in his community takes the form not of the presentation of any pointer readings, but simply of suggestive inferences about human beings, much as might occur in a conversation between two educated persons with an interest in "what makes people tick." (Sometimes, indeed, it descends somewhat beneath this level—see for instance his argumentation concerning the irrelevancy of history, with his vague but impassioned championship of "the *Now*" [page 239].) But, presumably, Skinner is not calling for the acceptance of any of the particular practices he describes (for which he gives no "laboratory evidence" at all); it is rather the *method* which he wants us to accept.

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losophers of their day — had been commissars of philosophy, empowered to decide whether Russell and Moore would be allowed to present their ideas to the public? Who would wish to have set Haydn in a similar way as arbiter over the young Beethoven?

These examples illustrate the principle that the progress of ideas is not served by casting over any given field — and *a fortiori,* over society as a whole — the mental limitations of one mind or one group of minds, no matter how superior a position they occupy in regard to other individual minds.

Now, it may be objected that the analogy is a false one; that the behaviorist psychologists would occupy, in relation to their wards, an extremely superior position, not at all comparable to that of Haydn to Beethoven. That is, the behaviorist might argue: "Of course, we would not wish a young innovating genius to have his hands tied by the established and conservative leaders in his field. But this would not be the case with human behavior. It is not the ideas of a young Beethoven that will be 'suppressed' by our behavioral engineers; it is simply the 'ideas' of the masses of uninspired, generally mediocre men and women, and they will assuredly gain in our system."

But such a rebuttal fails to see the full implications of the problem of innovation. Very often, innovation depends not only on qualities internal to the innovator (which conceivably could be predicted by a system of testing), but on a unique combination of circumstances in which the innovator finds himself. As Hayek describes the situation:

> . . . we have no way of predicting who will at each step first make the appropriate move or what particular combinations of knowledge and skills will suggest to some man the suitable answer, or by what channels his example will be transmitted to others who will follow the lead. It is difficult to conceive all the combinations of knowledge and skills which thus come into action and from which arises the discovery of appropriate practices or devices that, once found, can be accepted generally. But from the countless number of humble steps taken by anonymous persons in the course of doing familiar things in changed circumstances spring the examples that prevail. They are as important as the major intellectual innovations which are explicitly recognized and communicated as such.[12]

TO PUT ANYONE in charge of a field of human activity — or of human activity in general — is necessarily to place him in a position of arbiter over every potential innovator. The original question remains: "Why doesn't Skinner propose establishing commissions in each science and art, to pass judgment on the efforts of all its practitioners?"

It seems clear, then, that innovation will not be promoted by a controlled society. But perhaps a controlled society is in the best position to make use of the knowledge already available (we are speaking now of "social knowledge"— the sort of thing with which the "Walden Code" deals). Actually, it is difficult to know what to say here, because Skinner appears to be maintaining a position little short of incredible. When he says, for instance, that the expression of gratitude is not to be allowed between members of society — does he mean this literally? Will it, under all possible circumstances, represent an infraction of the Code to express gratitude? What if a man saves my life at the risk of his own? Or, to put it more strongly, what if he submits to torture, in order to conceal my place of hiding from my would-be murderers? Does Skinner mean to say that I will have to clear it with a board of behavioral engineers before I express my gratitude? Perhaps the rule concerning gratitude, when it emerges from the laboratories, will contain a clause permitting its expression in certain cases. But then, how many clauses will it contain? In general, how will it be possible for a group of men — endowed, as we may assume them to be, with a great deal of scientific psychological knowledge — to foresee all the possible combinations of circumstances which occur in social life, circumstances which often include the pitting of one generally-accepted rule against another?

[12] F. A. Hayek, *The Constitution of Liberty* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), p. 28.

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Since it is clearly impossible, perhaps Skinner could allow a certain leeway in the interpretation of his gratitude rule. But it requires little insight to see that this would be a fatal breach in his system. Once people are permitted a degree of personal discretion in the application of a behaviorist "truth," it becomes possible for them to modify the rule itself, in the way that judges have made dead-letters of various laws by their interpretations of them. Control over behavior would once more pass from the hands of the psychologists to those of society at large, the very situation Walden Two was created to eliminate. Thus, we must assume that no leeway will be allowed in the interpretation of the various behaviorist maxims. Now, what does this imply? It implies that the only place where society's accumulated knowledge can be refined and fitted for application to an infinitely great variety of circumstances is in the laboratories of the behavioral psychologists. If someone thinks that a received rule ought to be modified in its application to the particular situation in which he finds himself, he is not allowed to do so. He must obey the rule as it has been handed down to him, and await the judgment of the behavioral engineers as to the permissibility of his suggested modification. Isn't it obvious that this would bring about virtually the *least* flexible and *least* adaptable society imaginable? To arbitrarily exclude by far the larger segment of society from the work of adapting received rules and maxims to various situations is to eliminate all these minds as centers for acquiring, refining and passing on knowledge. Such a procedure would make sense if there were good reason to believe that the minds put in control were omniscient — but our previous discussion of free will and selective conditioning does not support that claim, at least as far as one important behaviorist is concerned, and it is unlikely that the case would be different with his fellows.

The argument for freedom is — quite unfortunately, from the viewpoint of the prospects for a free society — an enormously complicated and abstract one, and we have only touched the surface here.[13] But, I hope that enough has been said to suggest that Walden Two is hardly a rival to a free society with respect to its ability both to adapt to changing conditions and to promote progress.

A word is perhaps in order for those who have read *Walden Two* and are made enthusiastic by its promise of a better existence for all, with less frustration and fewer misdirected lives than we see around us today. The important thing to realize is that the choice before us is not between whatever improvements behavioral psychology offers us in the problems of arranging our lives, and the benefits a free society offers us in the way of innovation and progress. Skinner's utopia indeed precludes the advantages accruing from the free play of ideas and the clash of values of the open society, but the reverse is not the case. In an uncontrolled social setting, people are free to adapt their lives in the light of behavioral psychology, and, if a substantial part of what Skinner claims for his ideas is true, then the same society which gave birth to them will be free to apply them to advantage.

The real value of the book, I think, is that it performs one of the functions credited by John Stuart Mill to even the most erroneous doctrines: by energetically presenting the case for a centrally-directed social order, it leads us to reconsider fundamentals, and forces us to re-examine and refine the arguments for the open society. Thus, while we may thank Skinner for promoting this end — which was indeed no part of his intention — those of us who are reasonable must decline the offering.

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[13] Much the most profound discussion of these problems which I have come across is contained in Hayek's *Constitution of Liberty*. An interesting discussion of Skinner's social ideas from a psychological point of view is provided by Carl R. Rogers, "The Place of the Individual in the New World of the Behavioral Sciences," in *On Becoming a Person* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1961), pp. 384-402.

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Benjamin Constant

RALPH RAICO

"HE LOVED LIBERTY as other men love power," was the judgment passed on Benjamin Constant by a contemporary. His life-long concern, both as a writer and politician, was the attainment in France and in other nations of a free society, and at the time when classical liberalism was the spectre haunting Europe—in the second and third decades of the last century—he shared with Jeremy Bentham the honor of being the chief intellectual protagonist for the new ideology. But it is not only for his elevated and disinterested love of freedom, nor for his historical importance that Constant merits being remembered: there is something to be gained in the study of his works by individualists aiming at the development of a political philosophy that will avoid the errors both of certain 18th century liberals and of 19th century conservatism.

Although in his day he was the most famous liberal spokesman on the Continent, Constant was never as well-known in the English-speaking world; especially today, when he shares the neglect into which his party has fallen, something will have to be said of his career.[1]

He was born near Lausanne, Switzerland, in 1767, a descendant of Huguenots who had fled France following the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Little need be noted of his generally erratic upbringing, except that he enjoyed a cosmopolitan education, studying at the universities of Erlangen and Edinburgh; the latter was at the time a center of Whig ideas, and boasted a faculty which included Adam Smith and Adam Ferguson. Constant was early attracted to Parisian life, and entered the world of the salons shortly before the beginning of the Revolution. He was absent in Germany until the fall of the Jacobins, returning in 1795, when he quickly became closely associated with Madame de Stael, and began a life of political pamphleteering. A brief period as a member of the Tribunate under Napoleon was ended after a too ardently expressed demand that the legislative assembly be allowed a voice in the making of laws—Constant and his friends were purged, Napoleon complaining of the "metaphysicians" in the assembly who were forever seeking to tie his hands. There followed a period of intense opposition to Bonaparte. At this time, Constant composed his *On the Spirit of Conquest and Usurpation*,[2] a demonstration of to what extent the aims and methods of Napoleon were out of keep-

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[1] The most complete biography of Constant in English is that of Elizabeth Schermerhorn, *Benjamin Constant: His Private Life and His Contribution to the Cause of Liberal Government in France* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1924).

[2] Published in Hannover, in 1813. It is reprinted in Edouard Laboulaye, ed.; *Cours de Politique Constitutionnelle* (Paris: Guillaumin, 1872), vol. ii, pp. 129-282. There have been several English translations of *On the Spirit of Conquest*, and the reader may consult this book for a good example of Constant's political and social thought.

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ing with the spirit of the new *bourgeois* world. He joined other liberals in enlisting under Napoleon's banner, however, during the Hundred Days, on the supposition that the great general would now be compelled to rule as a constitutional monarch. At this time, Constant drafted the constitution under which Napoleon was to have governed. With Waterloo and the restoration of the Bourbons, Constant joined the liberal opposition, serving in the Chamber of Deputies and acting as a brilliant and forceful critic of every governmental policy which he viewed as inconsistent with the rights of man. This was the period of his greatest influence, when he enjoyed a vast European reputation and inspired groups of young disciples as far away as Warsaw. He died in 1830, shortly after the establishment of the July Monarchy.

With two important facts regarding Constant, we will not be concerned here, although they merit mentioning. First, that he occupies an honorable place in the history of French literature, principally through his short novel, *Adolphe*; and, second, that, like the hero of this work, his was a painfully introspective intellect, and his a personality that found it impossible ever to be less than studied and analytical. His psychological problems and the complex emotional life to which they led have provided most of the content for the studies of Constant which have appeared up until the present. While it is likely that these aspects of his personality had a certain bearing on his political and social thought, it did so in too complex a way to warrant closer examination here.

FRANCE HAS, together with England and Scotland, contributed more than any other nation to the theory, if not to the practice, of liberty. In the line of great French liberals, which begins about the second quarter of the 18th century with Montesquieu, Constant was the first of the generation following the Revolution. This circumstance was of the greatest significance for the development of his political ideas, and to it may be traced the fact that he tended to regard political problems from a somewhat different viewpoint from that of most of the earlier liberals. This is most evident in his attitude toward the power of the central government.

Turgot and the Physiocrats, for example, had championed the extension of state power in the interests of "reform." These liberals saw the economic life of France hamstrung by the guilds and by an incredibly circumstantial mercantilist regulation; its social life irrationally structured on the basis of nobility of birth; its intellectual life, though intense, yet furtive and often even subterranean, because a large number of persons and bodies—from the Sorbonne to some influential duchess at Versailles—had the *de facto* power of ordering any book they wished committed to the flames; and they blamed the casual heaping up of tradition for such an intolerable state of affairs. They thought that what was needed was the action of an enlightened, ordering mind, endowed with sufficient power to sweep aside the machinations of all those who had a vested interest in the traditional encumbrances on freedom. For this reason, the *philosophes* (both those among them who were essentially liberals, and those who cannot fairly be classed as such) were enthusiasts of the "enlightened despotism" fashionable among certain rulers of the time. This is also the reason that led virtually the whole philosophical party wholeheartedly to support Louis XV in his suppression of the *parlements*; since these law courts had been the only legal check on the power of the king, the favor shown by the *philosophes* for this arbitrary action would otherwise be difficult to understand.[3]

With the upheaval of the Revolution, however, most of the institutions of the Old Regime which had (with government sanction, to be sure) acted as centers of privilege, were swept away. Industrial

[3] The inability of many of the French liberals to fully appreciate the operations of a spontaneous, undirected social order has been emphasized by F. A. Hayek; cf. his stimulating essay, "True and False Individualism," in *Individualism and Economic Order* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948).

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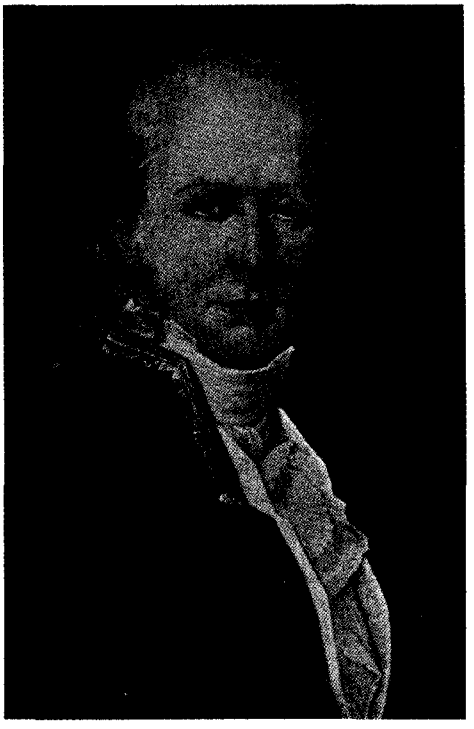
freedom was granted to all, Protestants and freethinkers no longer had to fear imprisonment for manifesting their beliefs, there was one law for commoner and noble. The focus of all threats to individual freedom became the government itself. The Church, nobility, guilds and other corporations which, endowed with coercive privilege, had vexed the free functioning of men, left the stage, and across the gap created by their disappearance the individual and the state, for the first time, stood alone facing each other. And now the liberals' attitude toward the state underwent a change.



Where previous French liberals had seen a potential instrument for the establishment of liberty, and one that might at times even safely be used for the realization of certain "philosophical" values, writers like Constant started to see a collection of standing threats to individual freedom: government is "the natural enemy of liberty;" ministers, of whatever party, are, by nature, "the eternal adversaries of freedom of the press;" governments will always look on war as "a means of increasing their authority." Thus, with Constant, the chief articulator of his generation's liberal ideals, we see the beginnings of classical liberalism's "state-hatred," which, after the 18th century's ambiguous attitude, marks its theory to the present day.[4]

Another feature distinguishing Constant from earlier liberals was what he conceived to be the ethical ends of social organization. In this respect, the *philosophes* had anticipated the central idea of Bentham, Constant's fellow liberal and almost exact contemporary. While the liberalism of writers like Mercier de la Rivière and Du Pont de Nemours, like Bentham's, was based exclusively on a utilitarian ethic, Constant's had a vaguer, but, it will appear to many, a more elevated foundation. This ought to be emphasized, since many writers on the history of liberalism — both conservatives and modern left-liberals—often write as if utilitarianism were historically the sole philosophical basis of liberalism. This was not the case with many of the most prominent liberals, including Constant, who emphatically rejected utilitarianism:

> . . . is it so true that happiness—of whatever sort it might be—is the unique end of man? In that case, our road would be quite narrow, and our destination not a very lofty one. There is not one of us, who, if he wished to descend, to restrict his moral faculties, to degrade his desires, to abjure activity, glory and all generous and profound emotions, could not make himself a brute, and a happy one . . . it is not for happiness alone, it is for self-perfectioning that destiny calls us. . . .[5]

Thus, Constant found the ethical ends which he wished to realize through a system of liberty not in the greatest-happiness principle, but in the development and enrichment of personality. This view was in keeping with the humanism then prevalent in Germany, and was possibly, in the case of Constant, traceable to his study of Kantian philosophy, and to the influence of cer-

[4] Cf. Henri Michel, *L'Idee de l'Etat.*

[5] *Cours de Politique Constitutionnelle,* vol. ii, p. 559.

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tain of his many German friends, including Schiller and especially Wilhelm von Humboldt.

THE AIM OF ALLOWING the widest possible sphere for individual development meant, in Constant's thinking, the restriction of government action within the narrowest possible limits, namely, defense against external and internal aggression:

> Whenever there is no absolute necessity, whenever legislation may fail to intervene without society being overthrown, whenever, finally, it is a question merely of some hypothetical improvement, the law must abstain, leave things alone, and keep quiet.[6]

The same conclusion is arrived at by another line of reasoning. To demand that individual activity be interfered with is to demand that individual judgment give way to the judgment of the government. Now, no matter how tenaciously the partisans of state action attempt to cling to abstract terms, in the last analysis their program calls for substituting the opinion of certain government officials for individual judgment, and this aspect of the problem may be stated in this way: is there good reason to suppose the government officials will as a rule make more intelligent decisions regarding whatever it is they wish to legislate about than the individuals concerned? Constant believed the answer to be definitely negative, and offered an interesting analysis of the drawbacks of government decision-making.[7] In the first place, the government officials will presumably be chosen, directly or indirectly, by the very people whom they are supposed to manage, and it is therefore unlikely that their outlook will be appreciably in advance of that of society as a whole. In fact, the officials will probably share the prejudices and restricted views of the relatively unenlightened majority, rather than the values and thinking of the progressive and innovating minority. In addition, Constant held, decisions arrived at by political officials exhibit certain other undesirable but necessary features: (1) errors in legislation spread their effects throughout society, while individuals' errors are limited in their consequences to a much smaller circle; (2) the effects of such erroneous laws will fall more on others than on the legislator, who thus has less of an interest in correcting them (at least, less of an interest in proportion to their bad effects) than a private citizen has in modifying his own errors, the burden of which falls on himself; (3) the fact that the legislator is further removed from the effects of his action brings it about that a greater period of time is required for modifying it, if it should prove wrong, than is the case with private individuals; (4) since legislators are continually under the eyes of hostile observers, modification of errors involves loss of prestige, and is also difficult for this reason; (5) finally, legislation has the defect of all collective decisions: it is a "forced give-and-take between prejudice and truth, betwen interests and principles," while decisions taken by individuals have the chance of being, in this sense, purer. Thus, Constant concludes, although in a regime of *laissez faire* we will have to renounce many grand and glittering undertakings on the part of the state, the chances and costs of errors in legislation are so great that, on net, the sacrifice will be well worth it.

The sphere in which individuals would be free to pursue their activities in accordance with their own values and judgment was to be delimited by a system of rights, which included the customary demands of the classical liberals: personal liberty (including the abolition of Negro slavery and all other forms of involuntary servitude), freedom of religion, freedom of the press, economic liberty, and so on.

Constant did not occupy himself particularly with economic questions. In this field he was first and last a disciple of the economists, especially of Adam Smith and J. B. Say, but asserting the principle of economic non-intervention in even more absolute terms than was customary with the professional econo-

[6] *Commentaire sur l'ouvrage de Filangieri* (Paris: Dufard, 1824), p. 70.
[7] *Ibid.*, pp. 55-70.

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mists, and going so far as to criticize the latter for not adhering firmly enough to their motto of *laissez faire, laissez passer*.[8] But the more interesting aspect of Constant's thought is his political philosophy, and it is to this that we now turn.

IN A SENSE, Constant's political theory may be considered a rebuttal to that of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, whose ideas in this field had gained increasing influence toward the end of the 18th century, coming to constitute something like the official ideology of the Jacobin, or democratic, party. Like Locke, Rousseau had posited an original social contract, but where the English philosopher had attempted to employ this notion as a foundation for civil rights, in Rousseau's conception the contract involved the total surrender by the individual of his life, liberty and possessions into the hands of the community. It is perhaps not too much of an over-simplification to say that Rousseau's idea amounted to a Hobbesian system, in which the despot is replaced by society as the great Leviathan, but for one important qualification: Rousseau recognized the dangers involved in his scheme, and believed they could be met by stipulating that, in return for the loss of rights as against society, the individual would be assured of an equal share with all other individuals in the sovereignty, in the determination and exercise of the "General Will." Accepting the idea that social life necessarily brings with it the total alienation of one's rights, Rousseau was thus the modern originator of the notion that freedom in a social context is identifiable with a condition of equal submission to the interests of the community and equal participation in the exercise of political power.

Constant believed that the championship of unlimited popular sovereignty by Rousseau and others represented much less of a break with the historical political pattern than might at first appear to be the case. What had happened was that these thinkers

> saw in history a small number of men, or even a single man, in possession of an immense power, which did much harm, but their wrath was directed against the possessors of power, and not against the power itself. Instead of destroying it, they only dreamt of displacing it. It was a scourge, and they regarded it as a conquest.[9]

Constant admitted the sovereignty of the people, in the sense that no government whose authority is not delegated to it by the people, is a legitimate one. But from this sense of sovereignty

> it does not follow that the universality of the citizens or those who are invested by them with sovereignty, can dispose as supreme master of the existence of individuals. There is, on the contrary, a part of human existence which necessarily remains individual and independent, and which is of right outside of all social competence.[10]

In analyzing Rousseau's conception of freedom, Constant had occasion to enter into an interesting historical explanation of the Rousseauian idea. He distinguished two senses of freedom: the liberty of the ancients, and that of the moderns, and asserted that Rousseau, as well as the Jacobins during the Revolution, had been attempting to re-introduce the sort of liberty which had been prevalent in the republics of classical antiquity, but which was, for various historical reasons, now outmoded. How this analysis was relevant to the state of opinion at the time may require some explanation.

DURING THE 18th CENTURY, the veneration of the classical reached such proportions that it has been referred to by one historian as a "cult." If few went to the lengths of the admittedly oversensitive Madame Roland, who as a girl wept for not having been born a Roman or a Spartan, the commonly-accepted picture of the typical citizen of the ancient republics as austerely virtuous and natural led many to consider whether the institutions which had pro-

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 14.

[9] *Cours*, vol. i, p. 9.

[10] *Ibid.*

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duced this presumably ideal human being could not be reproduced in France with similarly beneficent effects. This cult achieved its peak during the Revolution, and especially with the triumph of the Jacobins. Now thousands were sent to their deaths, cities were razed and wars declared, all accompanied by the invocation of what amounted to a schoolboy's vague but over-heated notion of "ancient liberty." This acceptance of the worst forms of tyranny—from arbitrary arrest and trial without jury to conscription, the "blood tax"—to the doubtlessly sincere cry of "liberty" resulted in much confusion. Conservatives were often even led to the conclusion that the tyrannical excesses were somehow connected with an "excess" of liberty, and resolved that in the future Jacobin tyranny would be avoided by a ruthless suppression of all liberal demands. But, Constant held, the truth of the matter was that what was involved were two different senses of "liberty": one, the sort of "liberty" generally characteristic of the ancient world—consisting in equal powerlessness before the state and equal participation in public affairs—was perfectly compatible with all the specific measures which were destructive of the second sort of liberty, the liberty characteristic of modern times. This was a liberty having to do above all with the sphere of private life, and one in which political activity plays a very subordinate role:

> Inquire, first of all, gentlemen, what, in our day, an Englishman, a Frenchman, an inhabitant of the United States of America, understands by the word, "liberty." It means for everyone to be under the dominion of nothing but the laws, not to be arrested, detained, or put to death, nor maltreated in any way as a consequence of the arbitrary will of one or more individuals. It is for everyone to have the right to express his opinion, to choose and exercise his occupation; to dispose of his property and even to abuse it; to go and come without having to obtain permission, and without having to give an accounting of his motives or actions. It is, for each man, the right to join with other individuals, either to confer on their interests, or simply to fill his hours and days in a manner more conformable to his inclinations and his fantasies. Finally, it is the right for each to influence the administration of the government, either by the nomination of all or of certain functionaries, or by representations, petitions and demands, which authority is more or less obligated to take into consideration.[11]

Constant makes some suggestive observations as to why political liberty can no longer be considered a significant enough good to outweigh the sacrifice of private liberties:

> The most obscure citizen of Rome and of Sparta was a power. This is no longer the case with the simple citizen of Great Britain or of the United States. His personal influence is an imperceptible element in the social will which impresses on the government its direction.[12]

Even leaving aside the question of the desirability of this way of life, man could, in the present day, simply not be a political animal in the sense proposed by the partisans of antiquity. Thus, the preservation of liberty in the modern sense becomes our chief task.

Rousseau had argued that, given popular sovereignty, there was no longer any need for guarantees against state power: if the sovereign was identifiable with the totality of the citizens, it was foolish to think that it would act in such a way as to harm the citizens. The speciousness of this reasoning, obvious enough in itself, was made explicit by Constant:

> . . . as soon as the sovereign is to make use of the force which it possesses, that is, as soon as it is necessary to proceed to a practical organization of authority, since the sovereign itself cannot exercise the authority, it delegates it. . . . The action done in the name of all necessarily being willingly or unwillingly at the disposition of an individual or of a few individuals, it comes about that in giving oneself to no one, one gives oneself, on the contrary, to those who act in the name of all.[13]

At the beginning of the age of democratic government, Constant insisted on a truth which doctrinaire democrats of

[11] *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 541.
[12] *Ibid.*, p. 545.
[13] *Ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 10-11.

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the Rousseauian sort have tended to overlook: "The people which can do anything it wishes is just as dangerous, is more dangerous, than any tyrant, or, rather, it is certain that tyranny will seize hold of this right granted to the people." [14] The worst outrages of the Terror could be regarded as logical deductions from Rousseau's principles, and "the *Social Contract*, so often invoked in favor of liberty, is the most terrible auxiliary of every form of despotism."

Having established the necessity of limits to state power, Constant had to seek for a system of effective guarantees to maintain such limits.

AFTER THE REVOLUTION and the Napoleonic period, it had become a fact too obvious for anyone to deny that the mere proclamation of a list of rights was in no way a sufficient guarantee of freedom:

> All the constitutions which have been given to France have equally accorded individual liberty, and under the empire of these constitutions, individual liberty has been ceaselessly violated. The point is that a simple declaration does not suffice. What is required are positive safeguards; what is required are bodies powerful enough to employ in favor of the oppressed the means of defense sanctioned by the law.[15]

That is to say, if individual rights are not to be a dead-letter, certain institutional arrangements must be developed and encouraged which can be counted on to work toward the maintenance of constitutional guarantees. In one sense, everything with which Constant concerned himself — from bicameralism, through freedom of the press and private property, to religion—may be viewed as an addition to the edifice of guarantees. In general, these positive guarantees may be divided into two sorts: there are those which are positively established by state action, and have to do with the form of the government itself, and there are those which consist in extra-governmental forces which there is good reason to believe can also be relied upon to serve the function of limiting government action to its proper sphere.

As regards the first category, Constant's thinking represents no major innovation. Rather, his merit in this regard is that of having been the systematizer of the structure of the liberal state, to the point where an eminent French historian of thought could say of him that he "invented liberalism." [16]

The method of limiting state power which, since the time of Montesquieu, had been thought of as most effective by the liberals was that of turning the state in against itself, through a system of division of powers. The author of *The Spirit of the Laws* had observed that "it is an eternal experience that anyone who possesses power tends to abuse it. . . . In order that power should not be abused, it is necessary so to arrange matters that power should be checked by power." If every increase in the power of some arm of the state could be counted on to meet the resistance of other arms of the state, then, because, while it extended the sphere of the former functionaries, it narrowed that of the latter, there would result another case of a great social good being achieved by tapping the vices of men. In this way, the will to power of state officials would be directed not so much against the rights of the people as against the power of other officials. The system of checks and balances and the division of powers were not, therefore, what one social democratic writer has recently called them: "contrivances, so dear to the [classical] liberals, for guarding against the possibility that governments might govern";[17] they were instead reasonable institutionalized protections against the virtual certainty that governments would try to govern too much.

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 280.
[15] *Ibid.*, p. 146.

[16] Emile Faguet, *Politiques et Moralistes du Dix-neuvième Siècle* (Paris: Société Française d'Imprimerie, 1891), p. 255.

[17] Harry K. Girvetz, *The Evolution of Liberalism* (New York: Collier, 1963), p. 105. In this passage, Prof. Girvetz goes so far as to include even "bills of rights" within the sweep of his Voltairian irony. Since he prefers to consider himself a "liberal," his book turns out to be a good illustration of its own sad theme.

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The system of checks and balances was, in Constant's thought, to operate at many different points in the structure of government, and the general outlines of his scheme will be familiar enough to anyone acquainted with the American Constitution. There was to be a bicameral legislature, including a House of Peers to be selected independently of democratic opinion. This was an institution which had been demanded by the Anglophile, or moderate liberal, party as early as the first year of the Revolution, and a number of historians, including Acton, have seen in the rejection of this proposal the first ominous signs of the thoughtless Rousseauian spirit that was to lead to the Convention. Constant further divided power between the legislature and the ministry, and between these two branches and the judiciary, which was to consist of judges whose immovability from office was guaranteed. A further limit on the power of the central government was implied in a system of departmental and municipal rights, an idea which had never found much acceptance in France, accustomed for centuries to the centralizing efforts of the monarchy.[18]

Besides the division of powers, another political guarantee of rights was to be found in a certain degree of popular representation in the government. But Constant insisted on restricting the franchise to property-holders. The extent to which democracy was necessary for the maintenance of liberty could, he thought, be served by such a limited franchise, and he was skeptical of the benefits of a more democratic system. He had seen Napoleon made Consul for life, and later Emperor, on the basis of universal manhood suffrage; he saw that in the situation in which France found itself during the Restoration, it was primarily the more prosperous and educated classes which were the bearers of the new liberal ideas. The masses of workers and, especially, peasants, cared less for the introduction of a liberal state than for the preservation of the old ways, to which they were accustomed—indeed, this was the reason why the only significant group which was interested in a mass-based suffrage at this time was a certain wing of the reactionary party.[19]

A major reason for Constant's disinclination to extend the franchise was the question of property:

> If, to the liberty of the faculties and of industry, which you owe them [the lower classes], you join political rights, which you do not owe them, then these rights, in the hands of the greatest number will inevitably serve to invade property. They will march toward it by this irregular route, instead of following the natural route, labor. . . .[20]

Although in historical retrospect the attempt to limit the franchise appears to have been unrealistic, Constant at least has the merit — as this passage shows—of having foreseen one of the principal features of modern democracy.

In addition to the guarantees of individual rights which were built into the system of government itself, Constant looked to certain social institutions to provide further guarantees. One of the most important of these was the press, and freedom of the press in this way took on a double character: it was itself a precious right, and it acted as one of

[18] Constant's constitutional ideas are elaborated on in his *Principes de Politique* and *Reflexions sur les Constitutions et les Garanties*, both reprinted in the *Cours*, vol. i, pp. 1-381.

[19] Georges Weill, *La France sous la Monarchie constitutionnelle* (Paris: Alcan, 1912), p. 5. As a rule, conservatives rejected democracy in the 19th century because of its connection with the French Revolution, and because they viewed it as part-and-parcel of the new-fangled liberal system. But the rivulet of conservative thinking which looked on democracy as a good tactic for depriving the liberal middle classes of predominance in the legislatures was sufficiently important to merit more attention than it has been given. Its chief practical consequence was the establishment of universal manhood suffrage in the Constitution of the North German Confederation, in 1867, by the Junker Bismarck, who was explicitly guided by the consideration just cited (cf. Gustav Mayer, *Bismarck und Lassalle* [Berlin: Dietz, 1928], pp. 33-39). The obvious fact that if the masses are anti-liberal democracy will be as much a peril to liberty as any other system is now forcing itself on the attention of even its more unreserved panegyrists, as they reflect on the civil liberties controversy in the United States; concern with this problem is sometimes put in the form of the question: "If put to a plebiscite, could the Bill of Rights gain a majority in America today?"

[20] *Cours*, vol. i, p. 55.

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the most powerful non-political guarantees of all other rights as well. The function of the press as a tribune for those whose rights were violated was incessantly emphasized by Constant:

> Everyone now knows that freedom of the press is nothing else than the guarantee that the acts of the government will be made known to the public, that it is the sole means of such publication, that without such publication the authorities are free to do what they will, and that to trammel freedom of the press is to place the life, property and person of every Frenchman in the hands of a few ministers.[21]

He looked, as we have mentioned, on the ministers, of whatever political complexion they happened to be at the moment, as the "eternal adversaries of freedom of the press." During his career as deputy in the French legislature, at the period of the Bourbon Restoration, Constant tirelessly fought all the various expedients which an ingenious and anxious government devised to interfere with this freedom. He was considered the parliamentary expert on the subject, and, in view of the place that debates in the French legislature occupied in the affairs of the whole continent, the great European defender of this liberty.

AN IDEA WHICH SEEMS to have originated with Constant is that a further guarantee against despotism is to be found in certain extra-governmental institutions capable of tying the loyalties of men against the day when the state might once again, as in the time of Robespierre, attempt to become the be-all and the end-all of social life. It was for this reason that he severely criticized the reckless spirit of uniformity and the senseless passion for pseudo-mathematical "symmetry" which inspired many of the Revolutionary measures; which, for instance, hatched Sieyes' suggestion that the departments, having replaced the traditional provinces, should be designated by number rather than by name, and which led, at the Jacobin Club of Strasbourg, to the interesting question being raised of whether it might not, after all, be better to guillotine Alsatians who were "divisive" enough to cling to German as their chief language. "It is remarkable," observes Constant, "that absolute unity of action, without any limits, has never found greater favor than in a revolution made in the name of the rights of man." Every institution with a claim to the loyalty of men was another potential enemy for a state aiming at total control; this was particularly true of such powerful social elements as regionalism:

> The interests and memories which are born of local customs contain a germ of resistance which authority suffers only with regret, and which it hastens to eradicate. With individuals it has its way more easily; it rolls its enormous weight over them effortlessly, as over sand.[22]

It is in this light that we should also view Constant's attitude toward religion, to the study of which he devoted many years. His works on this subject are no longer read, but they contributed to the post-18th century attitude, which no longer considered religion to have originated as a priestly invention ("when the first knave met the first fool"), but as a response to a deeply-rooted need. The writers of the Enlightenment had also, with few exceptions, been bitterly hostile to organized religion in general, and particularly to the Catholic Church. Faced with an often savage religious intolerance, thinkers like Voltaire and Diderot explicitly championed control of the Church by the State,[23] believing the only alternative to be the reverse order of control. Constant, however, held that, given religious toleration as an established right, guaranteed as other rights were, religion could, from a strictly political point of view, serve the same sort of valuable function as regionalism. He welcomed it as a similar "divisive" element in social life, and warned against the proposal of the *philosophes* of com-

[21] *Ibid.*, p. lxi.

[22] *Ibid.*, vol. ii, pp. 170-171.

[23] Kingsley Martin, *French Liberal Thought in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Turnstile, 1954), pp. 136-37.

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bining the spiritual and political powers in the same hands:

> What does it matter if spiritual pretensions have given way to political authority, if this authority makes of religion an instrument, and thus acts against liberty with a double force?[24]

CONSTANT'S BREAK with the Enlightenment and the Revolution by no means meant that he was sympathetic to the ideas then being advanced by conservative writers like de Maistre and Bonald, who attempted to erect the Christian notion of Original Sin into the theoretical underpinning for a system of oppression, arguing for a state strong enough to keep a firm check on natural man. Constant could not imagine how politicians could be thought not to have participated in the Fall, and saw no merit in this

> bizarre notion according to which it is claimed that because men are corrupt, it is necessary to give certain of them all that much more power . . . on the contrary, they must be given less power, that is, one must skillfully combine institutions and place within them certain counterweights against the vices and weaknesses of men.[25]

Furthermore, his respect for traditions as encumbrances on government action did not mean that he was prepared, as were the conservative writers of his day, to enshrine simply any tradition. The touchstone for him was the employment of force in connection with the traditional arrangement. He rejected both the program of some of the Revolutionaries, who had been eager enough to use force to destroy traditions which did not fulfill their personal, "philosophical" values, and the program of the conservatives, who typically recommended the use of state power for opposite ends. Constant was content to leave changes in traditional institutions to the workings of forces outside of the state:

> If I reject violent and forced improvements, I equally condemn the maintenance, by force, of what the progress of ideas tends to improve and reform insensibly.[26]

In the last analysis, Constant was as much an opponent of conservatism as of the Jacobin system, and on much the same grounds: both involved violent interference with the rightful sphere of the individual's private judgment and action, the seed-bed from which emerge the things that make social life worthwhile. It is interesting to note, in this connection, that when faced with the beginnings of the socialist movement, in the form of the Saint-Simonians, Constant thought it appropriate to associate them with the representatives of the closed societies of the past; they wished, he asserted, simply to be popes over the economic organization of society, and "priests of Memphis and Thebes" over its intellectual life.[27]

BENJAMIN CONSTANT MAY serve as a good rebuttal to the stereotype of the classical liberal as anti-religious, utilitarian and fanatically democratic, a stereotype which is often employed by contemporary conservatives who insist on confusing classical liberalism with Philosophical Radicalism. And for everyone sincerely interested in discovering a liberalism which will avoid some of the errors of certain liberal thinkers of the past, Constant may be looked on as a good starting point.

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[24] *Filangieri*, p. 27.

[25] Cited in Georges de Lauris, *Benjamin Constant et les Idées Libérales* (Paris: Plon, 1904), p. 6.

[26] *Cours*, vol. ii, p. .172n.

[27] Sébastien Charléty, *Histoire du Saint-Simonisme* (Paris: Hachette, 1896), p. 54.

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NEW BOOKS AND ARTICLES

THE FOLLOWING IS A SELECT LIST OF BOOKS AND ARTICLES WHICH, IN THE OPINION OF THE EDITORS, MAY BE OF INTEREST TO OUR READERS.

Alfred Avins, ed., *Open Occupancy vs. Forced Housing Under the Fourteenth Amendment* (New York: Bookmailer, 1963). This symposium includes contributions from a large number of legal scholars and judges, evaluating the basis for legislation outlawing discrimination in housing by builders and landlords. It is particularly timely at present.

Israel M. Kirzner, *Market Theory and the Price System* (Princeton, N. J.: Van Nostrand, 1963). A textbook in intermediate price theory designed for undergraduates, by a contributor to *New Individualist Review*. Although Prof. Kirzner presumes that his readers have already had a course in elementary economics, some students without such training may find it useful, since, in the author's words, "determined efforts have been made to subordinate geometry to economic reasoning."

Leonard W. Levy, *Jefferson and Civil Liberties: The Darker Side* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1963). A fairly conclusive demonstration that the revered saint of civil liberties was not all that he was cracked up to be outside of the area of religious dissent. One surprise is Jefferson's stand on the Alien and Sedition Acts. In opposition to Madison's view that seditious libel should not be an offense, he argued merely that the question should be left to the states.

Oskar Morgenstern, *On the Accuracy of Economic Observations* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1963, new edition). An influential economist questions the value of most modern statistical economics. His ideas on this subject are presented in a more popular form in an article, "Qui Numerare Incipit Errare Incipit," *Fortune*, October, 1963.

Karl Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1963), paper. A reprint of the classic defense of the free society against the totalitarianism of Plato and Hegel. A new collection of Prof. Popper's essays has also been published recently: *Conjectures and Refutations* (New York: Basic Books, 1963). While most of the essays concern the philosophy of science and the history of philosophy, there are several interesting discussions of political and social topics, such as "Towards a Rational Theory of Tradition," and "Utopia and Violence."

Murray N. Rothbard, *America's Great Depression* (Princeton, N.J.: Van Nostrand, 1963). Dr. Rothbard, whose name will be familiar to our readers, presents an analysis of the Crash of '29 and the subsequent depression, based on the Austrian theory of the business cycle. His conclusion is that, far from being an unanswerable instance of the failure of the market economy, the Crash is attributable to a government-sponsored policy of credit-expansion, while the Great Depression itself was aggravated and prolonged by the measures taken by the government to alleviate it.

Robert H. Bork, "Civil Rights—A Challenge," *New Republic*, August 31, 1963. Prof. Bork presents a clear case against the proposed civil rights bill now before Congress. In a reply, the editors of the *New Republic* accuse Bork of advocating a principle (neo-liberalism) which "would today require the repeal of the industrial revolution." See also Bork's reply in the September 21, 1963, issue, where Bork continues his assault on the dominant social-democratic position on civil rights and the Negro revolution.

Richard J. Whalen, "Here Come the Conservatives," *Fortune*, December, 1963. Mr. Whalen provides a brief history of the revival of conservatism in America in the post-war period. He is careful to distinguish the many, often conflicting, strains of thought at work in this revival, but concludes that conservatives "have thrust themselves forward as a force that Liberalism can never again ignore." An excellent introduction to an important contemporary American phenomenon.

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NEWE BOKES & ARTICULLES

YE FOLLOWING IS A SELECTE LISTE OF BOKES AND ARTICULLES WHICH, IN YE OPINIONE OFF YE EDITORS, MAYE BEE OFF INTEREST TO OVRE READERS.

John Selden, *Of the Dominion, or, Ownership of the Sea, Two Books. In the first is shew'd, that the sea, by the law of nature, or nations, is not common to all men, but capable of private dominion or proprietie, as well as the land. In the second is proved, that the dominion of the British sea, or that which incompasseth the isle of Great Britain is, and ever hath been, a part or appendant of the empire of that island. Written at first in Latin, and entituled, Mare clausum seu, De domino maris, by John Selden. Translated into English, and set forth with som additional evidences and discourses, by Marchamont Nedham.* (London: Published by special Command, Printed by William Du-Gard, by appointment of the Council of State: and are to be sold at the Sign of the Ship at the New Exchange, 1652). A noteworthy study in the tradition of private roads, private police forces, and private ownership of courts.

Orders Appointed to bee executed in the Citie of London, for setting Roges and idle persons to work and for relefe of the poore. (London: John Daye, dwelling over Aldersgate, 1580). [Title page bears text of Proverbs 16 and Psalm 61.] A captivating study of social security legislation in England and its effects upon the level of unemployment.

Sir John Fortescue, *A learned commendation of the politique lawes of England; wherein by most pitthy reasons and euident demonstrations they are plainely proued farre to escell as well the Ciuile lawes of the Empiere, as also all other lawes of the worlde, wyth a large discourse of the difference betwene the ii gouernements of kindomes; whereof the one is onely regall, and the other consisteth of regall and politique administration conjoyned. Written in Latine aboue an hundred yeares past, by the learned and right honorable maister Fortescue knyght, lorde Chauncellour of England in the time of King Henry the vi, And newly translated into Englishe by Robert Mulcaster.* (London: R. Totell, 1573). A learned commendation of pitthy reasons and eudent demonstrations which has been plainely proued farre escelled by its advertising agency.

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